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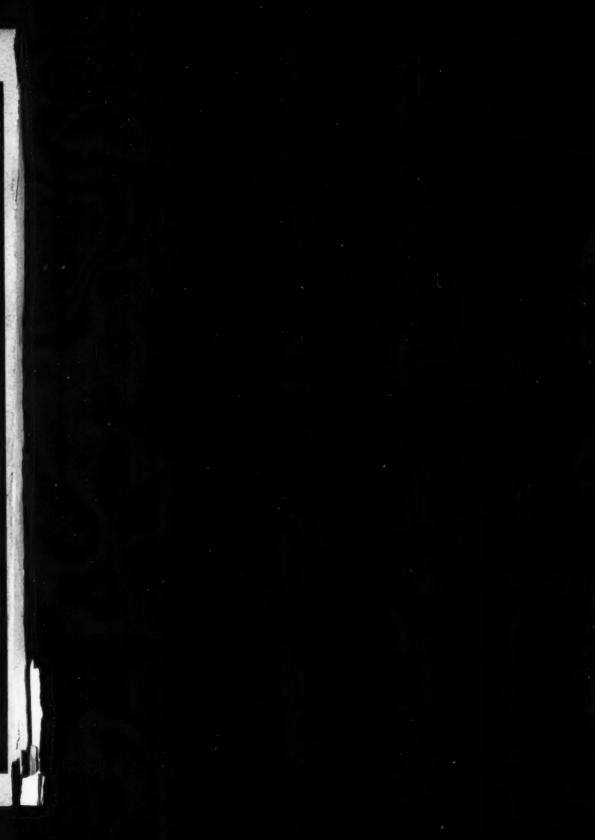
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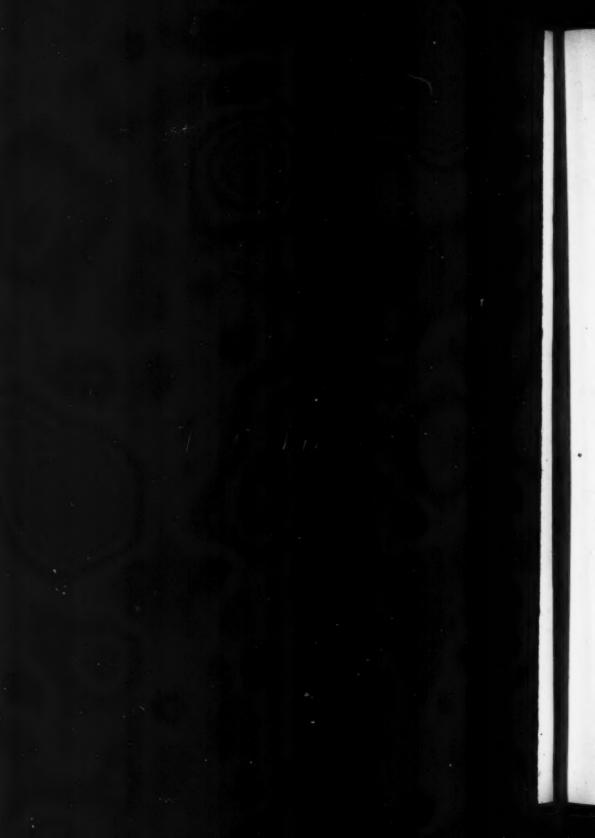
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THE SURRENDER

By J. H. Twells, Jr.

HE small greenish eyes looking into hers had the semblance, to Eva's mind, of things manufactured, created of man as cleverly as were the tope-colored deer-hide skirt, tope coat and the smart little hat that topped the woman's head with a touch of genius from New York's smartest milliner. Yet there was a certain human warmth penetrating the wealth-crust of the woman, a warmth not often existent in a bornto-it social leader. There was even a suggestion of tears in the eves, the hint of a sensibility beyond the lore of her kind.

"You are so cold!" she was saying.
"You go off like this into a new world,
a new life, leaving me as though you
were crossing the street instead of the

ocean."

Eva Blackford looked toward the crowd gathered below them on the quay near the great ship's gang-plank. She knew this woman loved her, as well as any woman is capable of loving another in the world of fashion and wealth, but the fact held no value for her. They had spent their schooldays together in an ultraselect seminary; they had been launched together upon the riotous tide of society and had both made "brilliant matches" in the modern sense. She knew she owed much to this friend, whose financial right to a high place in the realms of wealth had brought her also into more intimate relations with the noblesse than she could have attained alone, Eva was not beautiful, neither had her father been possessor of sufficient millions to hold a substantial place in the world of riches. Her faultless form had carried her through the ordeal of debut, and the short-nosed, delicately modeled face had gradually acquired a charm that could not be defined by lines; yet without some money she might have been overlooked in the rush of frivolity and scandal, had it not been for the interest of this associate of her schooldays.

Eva had aimed as deliberately and unromantically as any for one millionaire, and had been unconsciously won by another. The marriage, according to public dictum, was a success; there existed but one flaw, unperceived by the social judges—she loved!

Three years of extravagance, yachting, sightseeing, ecstatic living, seasoned with some anxiety, and then—a shock, and a break of the tie she had

deemed indissoluble.

When she married Bob Winstanley he had looked upon the world-each twelvemonth with keener insight-for more than thirty years; she had lived but twenty-four, and had not vet seen beyond the outer husk. Even when her illusions became dimmed by the glare of new conditions, marriage had preserved for her its sacred significance. In loving and believing herself loved, she was content. She entered merely as a matter of form the dissipation that constituted so large a proportion of the atmosphere in which her lot was set. Reality was to her too sweet to smother in drugged senses or in struggling for the unreal. She had been satisfied to stand with him she loved and watch the wild world spin about her, to add her voice

to its joyous hubbub, to applaud its struggles after amusement. In these struggles she had seen nothing vicious; the iridescent hues on the pool about which she hovered—the deep, impenetrable pool of social mysteries—were to her as the lovely coloring of a bubble to a child. Never had she dreamed of the diseased stagnation concealed in the darkness beneath, until one day the surface was roughly broken, and he whose wife she was sark, a victim to its invisible miasma.

The fact that the world about her attached little importance to an event that had shattered every dream and illusion of her life prevented her giving voice to her anguish of soul. For the first time she saw that world as it really was, and although reeling in dizzy horror on the brink of an abyss she had never suspected, she knew of no one who might understand and

give her satisfactory counsel.

In the strength of that self-reliant calm given strong natures in the hour of their keenest trial, she determined alone upon the only plan which to her seemed possible. She took the initiative and gave her husband the freedom he had not so much as asked for, although he had made no attempt to conceal the true state of his feelings. The divorce had been obtained very quietly, after Winstanley had spent more than a year abroad in the wake—by his own confession—of another woman.

Eva was once more Miss Blackford, and the world she had learned to see through rosy glasses had become glaring and wide-ugly with mockery and lies. She was quiet, but she was not deceived. The walls that hemmed in the world to which she was born and bred were too high to see beyond. It was all the world she knew, and although she now scented the poison in every flower, discerned the mask on every face, and suspected venom in every tongue, she could imagine no other. That there was peace beyond the walls she knew, but it was the peace of cows and peasants-the calm of empty fields, after the splendor and

gaiety of palaces, and her nature shrank from it.

Yet the environment she was familiar with had become unbearable; this woman, so closely associated with the past, fretted her with the suggestion of an obligation she was not willing to recognize. She longed to be away from them all, to feel the great ship move, and to see the familiar outlines of New York fade into obscurity.

"You lock everything away in yourself!" continued her friend, after waiting vainly for response. "It is not wise, Eva; it will bring about a mor-

bid state of mind."

Eva laughed softly and caught back her veil that had become loose. "I don't think I am likely to become morbid; and I really don't see the advantage of trying to unbosom myself to you, of things I don't understand. At any rate, you may be sure I sha'n't commit suicide on the voyage, with three cases of champagne at my disposal! Imagine! What am I to do with it? Bathe in it, or—heavens above! here come Jack Atley and his wife, and Beverley, and—what am I to do? I do so hate this farewell business!"

"Just one word, Eva, before they come," said the other woman hurriedly. "I—I hope you won't mind, but—let me ask you this. What are you going to do for money over there? After what you have been accustomed to it is going to be very hard to be stinted. You should have allowed Bob to give you an income; it was your right, and the lawyers—"

right, and the lawyers—"
Eva made a slight gesture. "Please don't worry about that! I am not

blindly playing the part of a fool or a child, my dear. What my father left is quite enough for my needs—over

there, if not here."

"But your father was—he left very little when he died. Forgive me, Eva, I am——"

"He left me quite sufficient, nevertheless."

"A paltry forty thousand! Oh, my dear-"

"I must ask you not to discuss this

point with me," interrupted Eva quietly. "What I have decided has been after due consideration, and is irrevocable."

"You might have mended your life so delightfully here! Ned Worthington is not a parti to be scoffed at."

"Here he comes now—a man whose fifty millions would doubtless be sufficient to make most women happy, despite his swollen face and evil mind; but not me, my dear, never! I have no desire to jump from the frying-pan into the fire. Now I beg of you, don't fret any more over needless anxieties. Life is too short. Help me to fence with these people gracefully, for I am not in a mood for them. Most of them have come out of curiosity; the rest from a false sense of duty."

"One at least, you must acknowledge, has come from love. Ned-"

"Love? Oh, heavens! Go back to

the nursery!"

Eva turned to offer her hand to the foremost of those approaching, and a moment later was the centre of a buzzing, laughing circle that harassed her with questions and advice.

"You are to have the pink of the season at your mercy on the voyage!" said one of the men. "The English chap, Lord Hamilton, of Western fame and newspaper notoriety. You know him, do you not?"

Eva's face clouded. "Very slightly," she replied, without interest; "I really never need companions on the sea. It seems more restful to be

alone."

When the last signal of departure had been sounded, and the thunder of grating chains, pulleys, whistles, bells and human voices grew dim as the steamer slid smoothly into the open sea, Eva stood leaning on the bulwark, unconsciously waving a handkerchief to those below.

Her chin rested in her hand, and into the long narrow blue eyes had come an introspective warmth like that in the eyes of a tigress who, after strife, has found a place of security wherein to compose herself in comfort.

A few paces back stood Hamilton;

fundamentally typically English, of the healthful, athletic order; superficially and educationally a cosmopolite.

He had not yet spoken to her, and now stood meditatively pulling a short mustache while noting the contour of her slight form, the poise of the small, bright-haired head with which he was already so familiar.

Eva was glad to be alone, and secretly prayed that no one might intrude upon the solitude she so craved.

The afternoon was cold and dull. Every sound seemed to ring an echo against the sickly fog through which skyscrapers, bridge and the vast, clumsy form of Liberty loomed with spectral indistinctness.

When they had passed almost out of view of the city Hamilton innocently

approached her.

"I wonder if you remember me? The few occasions of our meeting were so brief, and—crowded!"

She glanced up with a gleam of resentment. "Oh, yes, quite well, Lord

Hamilton."

He had studied her so minutely, unperceived, at social functions during the time he was there that the shade of displeasure was noted, though he did not reveal his recognition of it by the slightest suggestion of awkwardness. His tone had lost none of its easy composure as he asked:

"Are you crossing alone?"

"Quite."

He raised his steamer cap again. "If I can be of any service to you, I beg you will command me."

She looked at him more kindly; that he had understood was a surprise and won her interest more than anything could have done, for she was not accustomed to being understood.

"Thank you, I shall not forget," she

said sincerely.

When he was gone she crossed to the other side of the deck, where a comfortable chair, rugs and books had been made ready.

Here she sat and watched the sea spread into distance; the city, where she had loved and suffered, fade. She believed she was thinking, that she

was planning the future with a just and complete comprehension of the past, while in reality her mind was dormant, her entire nature relaxed to indulge the satisfaction of solitude. She had been hurt deeply enough to feel her Self for the first time—to sense her own individuality which had never before stood to her independent of another, and with which consequently she found it difficult to communicate. shock had also roused her more vividly to the living world; she appreciated more keenly the criticism and demands of her kind. Like one thrust suddenly from a calm and secure abode into the rush of outside life, she was dazed and morally confused.

So far thought had offered no real although an impulse, consolation. created partly of pride and partly of anger, impelled her to think, to plan a

means of righting the wrong done her. Wrong? What was the wrong? She could grasp it no more than a child can comprehend the Pyramids; it was

too largely unjust.

Her claim upon Winstanley was still as real to her as the claim upon life is to one wrecked in midocean, who floats helplessly on a fragment, awaiting improbable rescue. was a vague relief in leaving him behind her, in speeding alone, with no definite aim in view, toward the capital wherein he had become lost to her.

Since the hour her sorrow was defined she had ceased to appreciate facts as facts; they avoided her, danced and hovered just beyond reach. Never having been familiar with discord and heartache, the reasoning to which trouble educates us was not yet at her command. She was stunned beyond a full realization of her sorrow; and, as is the case with a sharply dealt wound, the more acute pain was to come later. It began the last evening of the voyage.

After the first twenty-four hours of unremunerative musing, her loneliness began to pall upon her, and she encouraged Hamilton's willingness to entertain her. His unintrusive attentions, his easy and amusing conversa-

tion, led her gradually to take pleasure in his companionship. There was nothing jarring about him, and his sensibilities were sufficiently acute to insure her against his attentions when she did not desire them. During the greater part of six days he had kept her from dwelling upon conditions that no amount of thinking could now remedy. He had read aloud, recounted amusing anecdotes, interesting experiences of his own in the Western States. and strange customs of foreign countries he had visited during his rambles over the world, which, for a man only arrived at his thirty-fourth year, had been considerable.

The last evening was splendid with undimmed stars and soft with briny zephyrs that gave it more the character

of June than October.

They paced the deck for the last time under that brilliant canopy of night, far from the noisy world, breathing the ocean's vast calm and the untainted air of the heavens. Eva regretted almost as much as he that the voyage was about to end; she had enjoyed the infinite peace, and the comfort of associating with one who had so unpresumingly placed himself upon a footing of unconventional ease with her. As a man she did not consider him; she had not even consciously appreciated his fine appearance, nor the refined and tactful qualities of character that had caused her to find pleasure in his associ-He had served the occasion adation. mirably; beyond that he meant noth-Consequently his unusually taciturn mood disturbed her; she sensed a serious significance beneath his silence, and began to dread something -the landing-life in Paris-she knew not what!

She turned to the bulwark and looked down into the black water, through whose silence they were gliding with a silky hiss.

Hamilton folded his arms and stared into the night; then he, too, leaned on

the bulwark.

"I'm in a deuced morbid mood," "Are you?" returned Eva, without

he said heavily.

stirring. "Well, please don't give it expression."

He tried to see her face in the dark.

"Why? Are you?"

"No, not morbid; why should I be? But I hate morbid talk. Tomorrow I shall be in gay Paris; that will divert me."

"And I?"

"Well?"

"Shall I be in Paris, too?"
"Shall you? I don't know."

"You know it depends upon you." His tone made her heart contract; she grew cold. The suggestion of emotion in his voice reminded her that she was free; that he knew it; that the whole wide world spread empty before her. It was a shock more poignant than the first blow had been, because it could not stun. Her loneliness was the more pitiable because she recognized in that moment more keenly than ever before the empty place in her life, as one, recovering from the first shock of bereavement, sees for the first time the empty place at table, and knows that the loss is real.

Her silence encouraged him, but so little that his voice was low and husky when he spoke. "In these few days your influence has wrought a change in me. I could not utter to you the things I have spoken so glibly to others. Somehow—perhaps I'm a fool—I seem to have been waiting for you, to—"

She stepped back with a little wild

gesture.

"Oh, there! You are a—you are mad! A few days—the sea—proximity! I am not looking for romance. If you knew anything about me you would see you are making a very false step!"

"I know all about you," he said, with a change to stern intensity. "I knew it a month ago. There is nothing—I

cannot see why---

She was about to turn away, but paused with a sharp laugh and a quick, angry deepening of color in the dark. "You! Do you imagine I am considering you? Do you think—? Oh, why have you spoiled the last evening of this peaceful trip?"

"Because I love you!" He caught her hand and held it in spite of her struggles. "Because—"

"Let me go! How dare you do this? You have little taste to submit me to such a scene upon so slight

acquaintance."

"Is it necessary to be conventional at such a time?"

"Let me go. This—this is unpardonable."

He dropped her hand. "You may be harsh with me, because I am at your mercy," he said, with real pain.

Eva heeded only her own, and grew

savage under the sting of it.

"You have been presuming, insulting?" she said, in a switt desire to retaliate. "A voyage association does not justify your speaking so to me. I—did not expect it of you."

As she hurried into the dark he stood an instant thinking, trying to define his fault, then bounded after

her

"Let me speak to you one word," he pleaded, his face showing white in the glare of an electric light. "I lost my head. For God's sake don't leave me like this! I know I was a fool. I—a woman can't understand; the words escaped me. I'd give my life to unsay them, to feel I had not spoiled—"

"What does it matter? It is done;

there is no more to say."

Her cold relentlessness calmed him, but did not stem his desire to make

amends.

"It isn't as though I—we knew nothing of each other," he said, with more self-possession. "Bob and I were chums for a bit in Paris; I—knew you through him; I couldn't feel like an absolute stranger, even before I met you in New York last year."

"Why haven't you told me this

before?" she asked.

He stared at her. "What?"

"That you knew him. Why have

you kept it from me?"

"You have never spoken of him; I imagined you preferred to avoid the subject."

Eva was looking vacantly into his

face; a new sensation was passing over her. "You knew it all, then?" she said presently, focusing her eyes on his. "This is why you dared to speak to me as you have?"

"I was a brute. The existence a fellow in my position leads today makes reckless inconsequence second nature. I rushed in where—"

She walked slowly back to where she had stood before, and rested her chin in her hands. He followed in perplexed uncertainty.

"God knows I would do anything to make amends. I'd get down here on my knees if I could hope to win

your pardon by doing it."

As she made no movement, he stood watching her, wondering. She seemed very far away from him, and she was. A great space was growing between her and the humanity she once looked upon as her natural kin; she was groping confusedly in a foggy new atmosphere; she was feeling the laboring pains of new instincts, new understanding. She understood now why the other women had called her a fool; why their eyes had opened when her love for Winstanley had escaped her unawares; why they were stunned by her preference to live on next to nothing, instead of enjoying the handsome competence it was her right to accept from the man she had married. who had tired of her. That he had tired of her meant as little to them as it did to this man!

She saw it all now written on the black face of the ocean, plainly, cruelly real. Yet there was the Past! Like the impression of a vine that has been roughly torn from the wall to which its first shoots had fastened themselves, that past was still visible to her, though she knew that it was dead. She at once dreaded and craved the process that was to wipe it out, not only for the impression, but for the cherished hope that she now knew must die with it. She felt suddenly matured, ripened, wise. The smooth rush of the ship, the black distance of night and sea, seemed but an insignificant background to an immense inner life that spread its wide horizon about her. The definable and substantial ground she had felt in spite of all must be under her feet was nothing but an infinity of space; she was alone, unshackled, floating in a sphere that contained no realities. The air had once taken shapes; she had clung to one, and it was nothing. This Hamilton knew, and he had seen no wrong in venturing upon her solitude.

"If you could only forget that stupidity," he said. "I swear you shall never have cause to regret it, if you will give me one more chance."

His voice brought her relief; she straightened up without looking at him, and spoke with unfamiliar calm.

"Listen: we shall imagine nothing has been said. It is easy enough what are words? There are greater noises to drown them."

"If I could find some to express—"
"Let us be impersonal. Tell me what you knew of him—all, every-

"Winstanley? Do you-?"

"First try to understand me. If our friendship means anything to you put aside for the time your feelings. I want you to meet me as sincerely as I am coming to you. I want you to tell me everything, the smallest, the blackest detail; I want you to forget yourself. If you cannot do this, say so now, and let us be done."

"I am ready to do anything you ask, but—I'm not good at detailing, or—I really would bungle everything.

Besides, what do I know?"

"It is hardly a moment when a man's honor to another should stand in the way. Nor am I asking you to make a concession to prove the sincerity of your interest in me. He has hidden little from me; it is merely a caprice. Tell me the particulars. There is in reality nothing crudely lawful or legitimate in our world—you know this; we owe nothing to the conventionalities we have been educated to ignore privately. Answer my questions; you can do this. But answer them with the absolute truth that our present relations entitle me to. We are outside

the world of prescribed right and wrong, are we not? We secretly do with a clear conscience whatever we think is right, when it pertains to our own lives, and to no other. I trust you; trust me, then. Can you do this?"

"I can do it-yes."

"Will you do it?"

"Yes."

"When he was in Paris, were you with him much?"

"Nearly always."

"And your time was spent how?"

"We had a joint apartment on the Champs Elysées. I had a studio and played at painting. He went in for music."

"How?"

"What do you mean?"

"How did he go in for music?"

"Oh, he scratched a violin for two hours every day, until I threatened leaving him; then he devoted himself to the composition of an opera, and nearly rang the insides out of a piano."

"He did all this during the three weeks he was in Paris, looking for an

automobile?"

"Yes."

"How long was he in Paris with you?"

"Three months."

A moment of silence. Eva was still looking into the dark. When she spoke her voice was deep and sharper. "There is no use prolonging this; you don't mean to be honest with me."

"I do; forgive me. By heaven! it

isn't an easy job."

"It is the greatest service you could do me."

"Even the darker shades?"

"I want everything. Remember, the black places are medicine. He did not go to London at all?"

"He went over for two weeks with

-her."

"Who?"

"Adelaide Fulton."

"Who is she?"

"A woman he knew in Chicago ten years ago."

"Tell me what you know of her." Hamilton leaned over the bulwark.

The rush of the ship sounded with soft, even monotony, and against it the laugh of a man rang clearly from the card-room below.

"I shall tell you all I saw; his confidences aren't mine," he said, after an

interval.

Eva touched his arm. "I ask you for all you know as a wounded man might ask another for help," she said, more gently than she had yet spoken. "A service is not worth much without some self-sacrifice. You would do more for a man friend in trouble. Why should you begrudge me what I ask at the price of a small sacrifice to your self-esteem?"

As he was silent she added, with real appeal: "You may hurt yourself a trifle in your own eyes, but not in mine, and I pledge you my word no

other---'

"Oh, I don't care for that! What is it to me what the rest think? It's the instinct, that's all. But when we come to that, what are moral instincts but the outcome of laws made for the masses?"

"You can help me a very great deal by telling me all that you know. You

will be doing me a service."

After another brief silence he said: "Your interest only makes my guilt greater, and it increases the temptation to leave nothing ugly out. You must see this."

"I know; forgive me. Tell me mere facts; since I ask for them you are

doing no wrong."

To encourage him, she broke the silence again by repeating her former

question.

"I never saw her before he came to Paris," replied Hamilton, "but believe he had been entangled with her in Chicago before his father died. She was not of his world, and old Winstanley got rid of her by putting up the funds to take her to Paris to have her voice developed for opera."

"She had a voice?"

"Yes, one of worth, as it proved. It meant more to her than marriage with a man likely to be cut off without a halfpenny of the paternal lucre; so

she demurred not at all, and accepted

the offer."

"And—what else?" Memories were flashing through Eva's mind, memories of her husband's love of music and her own tireless efforts during every free hour to make herself capable of gratifying it.

"Oh, she received a handsome monthly allowance until Winstanley died; studied from the best masters,

and lived like a lady in Paris."

"And then?"
"How do you mean?"
"Is she still studying?"

"Lord, no! Do you mean you have never heard of her? She is the star of the Opera Comique."

"And he-Bob?"

"He saw her there, of course."

"Openly?"

"In every way, if you desire the truth. He is bewitched, mad, sunk as a rat in a bucket of tar; and the meaning of it passes my understanding."

There was a short silence. Eva hoped he might continue, that he might explain why the situation was incomprehensible to him, while something under her pain tempted her to say: "Oh, music—he is devoted to music; he would kneel at the feet of anyone who could sing well." Instead she remained coldly and thoughtfully silent, although she was not thinking. Most of this she had known before, for Winstanley had made no attempt at concealment, save the woman's name and the fact that he had been with her in Paris.

After waiting some time, Hamilton leaned nearer and asked: "Have I told you too much?"

She uttered a short little laugh. "No; why too much? Tell me more."

Two bells were struck; the voice of a sailor calling reached them; the black water hissed and seethed far below, and glowed with silver phosphorescence.

Eva stirred. "When do we get in tomorrow?" she asked.

"At seven."

"An ungodly hour to be waked!"
"One needn't leave until nine."

"Oh, but the noise! Good night."
She held out her hand.

"May I see you as far as Paris tomorrow?" he asked as he held it.

"Yes, but I go second, you know. No more private compartments! I have changed my habit of holding aloof from the masses."

II

The journey from Havre to the capital was uninteresting, and insufferable from overheating. Two blankfaced nuns entered the carriage at Rouen, and a little black-eyed tradesman, whose quick, restless movements gave him the appearance of a black-and-tan terrier. A raw-boned, discontented-looking soldier had been the vehicle's third acquisition since Havre, his wide red trousers and cap giving a splash of brightness to the sombre interior.

Eva, to avoid talking, had opened a novel, but her eyes followed the printed lines without grasping their meaning. After all, it was strange she should have elected to come to Paris of all places! Perhaps it was foolish; she might be running a risk; he, Winstanley, might misunderstand it. But what did it matter? She was to live her life for herself now. Paris attracted her; it was gay, bright, independent, and clear of the smoky atmosphere of her old life. She would begin again, and ease away the lines brought to her face by past months. The world would be different, but she might yet laugh in it. Why not? What folly to take anything too seriously! She was still young; other woman had survived the wreckage of their ideals.

She turned a leaf quickly and came upon some conversation that relieved after the uncomprehending perusal of close-set type. She tried to follow it while in her mind some lines she had read somewhere rang with clear per-

istence:

I said to my grief, "We two must part, Part now, and for aye," I said. So I buried it deep, deep down in my heart. "It is dead," I cried, "it is dead!" As I laid it down in its burial-place, It stared with threatening eyes

As the grave closed over its mocking face, "I shall rise!" it said, "I shall rise!"

She turned swiftly to Hamilton. "Have we arrived?"

The train was slackening; voices shouted without.

Hamilton dropped the paper whereon he had been studying for some minutes the headlines, "La Russie contre le Japon."

"Not yet; the next. Are you tired?" "More than tired. I feel as though my soul were wearing through my body. What a lot of nonsensical stoppages! We have been longer on this trip from Havre than on the voyage from New York!"

Hamilton's connoisseur glance lingered on the petulant curve of the clear-cut lips.

"You were not intended for economies. This carriage is loathsome. Had we had a comfortable private compartment we-"

"Oh, no! It would have been deadly. These people help to amuse; if they only were a little more Frenchy, as it is understood by us!"

Hamilton's eyebrows went up; he ran his finger along the back of his head and mentally digested the flattery of her words.

"More sallow-faced spinsters!" exclaimed Eva as two thin, middle-class women got in with numberless bundles, and, cackling like disturbed hens, sprawled themselves over the opposite seat, occupying sufficient space for three. Immediately after them came a neatly appareled individual of the second-class modiste type, who made for the six-inch space they left.

"No, no! il n'y a point de place!" shrieked one of the first-comers, giving the modiste a push as she was about to seat herself. "You may not sit here."

"But I must! There is plenty of space; move over."

"I'll see myself move over! Never an inch! Why do you come here, when there are many other-?"

"Then I shall sit upon you!" "If you do you'll regret it, as the good God hears me!"

"Get over there!"

"No, there's no room for you. Youwould crush me. Get out!"

"We'll see!" The modiste squeezed her ample person into the narrow space, and sent the two spinsters together like billiard balls.

"C'est épouvantable!" screamed one. "Some people have no decency! Dieu! if I were made like that-if I had such a body to find space for, I'd be polite enough not to make it an

intrusion upon others!"

"You might both of you have set your pack of bones on the windowledge—that's good enough for such as you. Pah! it's easily seen you have been made fighters because you've never had anyone to fight for you! Poor things, it's pitiable to be such failures!"

The spinsters looked toward the

"If Louis does not come soon he will be left!" said one. "La! la! there is the signal! Louis! Louis!"

"Le voilà!" screamed the other, catching sight of a small boy with large ears and an enormous bow under his chin.

"Mon pauvre garçon, there is no room here for you, because—all classes of persons are allowed to enter! Get into the next carriage, mon cher petit, and fear nothing; it will be only for a few moments!"

"Parbleu!" gasped the modiste, looking about at everyone present, "and I was expected to climb down again, and risk losing the train, for that rat!"

The spinsters replied only by a simultaneous shove that was returned with interest, and the train started, amid a war of snappy exclamations and dagger glances.

Eva was laughing behind her book, and Hamilton, with the air of one to whom there is nothing new, was enjoying her laughter.

"Behold the mustard and pepper of the revolutionary salad!" she said, when the train's rattle had brought silence.

"They are she-devils," he returned.

"I'd rather meet a hungry tiger in its jungle than match words with an enraged Frenchwoman!"

"Yet they have their charm for

men."

"For Frenchmen, yes. Women are la distraction exquise of the nation; the men have learned to dote upon their very faults. After all, it's my opinion that most men love a woman when her faults begin to appear."

"Oh, no; a woman dares to show her faults when she knows she is

loved."

"I don't know. That is the more accepted view, but natural deductions become sophistry when they are brought to bear upon the higher realms of society. The atmosphere we breathe is so entirely adverse to nature that we need a new code of laws, a new dictionary, a new vocabulary, new maxims, new interpretation. We have drunk and eaten so fully of the forbidden fruit that we no longer see the grass green. Right and wrong have become confused, like lamp-posts to the vision of a drunkard."

"Nonsense. Do you see life like

this?"

"Certainly; and my very recognition of it makes its power more intoxicating."

As she looked at him there was interested calculation lurking under the

puzzled inquiry.

In meeting her eyes his softened. "Do you know, you have remained surprisingly innocent in spite of having been reared in this atmosphere."

"Have I?" Her color deepened slightly; a thought flashed across the straight brows. "You mean stupid.

Dare to speak truth!"

"No, innocent; and the reason is not difficult to find; it is still more with you than you wish to acknowledge."

Again her glance was full upon him, now critically inquisitive. She turned quickly to the window. "Paris!" she said softly. "Thank heaven we are here!"

Hamilton studied the pale profile, so lovely in spite of its faults—the line of the chin a trifle too sharp, the nose too short, but the brow white, smooth, regal, above eyes that held worlds of bewildering power, passion, intellect and independence. It was an unbalanced face, partly child and partly woman of the world, and in this combination were suggested possibilities that thrilled him. Browning's lines went through his head:

Had she willed it, still had stood the screen So slight, so sure, 'twixt my love and her: I could fix her face with a guard between, And find her soul as when friends confer, Friends—lovers that might have been.

"Now for the ordeal of trunk examining!" murmured Eva, starting up as the train came to a standstill.

"If you will permit it, my man will attend to that. He is an adept at balking officials, and knows most of them here personally. Where will you stop?" he asked, when she had acquiesced.

"A place recommended by a woman on the steamer, called the Pension

Rodinot."

"A pension!"

"Yes; I had chosen the Continental,
but dread the loneliness of hotel life."

"You may feel more lonely in a group of boarding-house Americans and sightseeing British spinsters."

"Oh, no; I shall like it. I need a new atmosphere."

He stood looking straight into her face; then, leaning from the door,

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called a facteur for the bags.

"Where is this estimable domicile?" he asked, as they entered a shabby little cab attached to two small, brokendown cobs that might have been vivified from an old print.

"Five rue de Bassano."

On the way he said: "I shall put up at the Elysées; it is near. May I see you sometimes?"

"Are you going to stay here?"

"May I?"

"Choose for yourself; but remember I shall acknowledge no responsibility, no obligation."

"I chose the day we left New York. May I offer you a little advice?"

"If I do not accept it 'neat' it will undoubtedly be served to me dis-

guised at odd moments. What is

it?"

"Your wisest plan at present is to have diversion. Don't let yourself be choked in antagonistic environment. If you are determined to become a pensionnaire at least let me take you out sometimes, let me amuse you beyond thinking."

"I am not afraid to think."

"No, but I am afraid to let you

think."

A short silence; Eva pressed her fingers more fitly into the glove. "Listen," she said. "You must not assume any proprietorship over me. Remember, I am free to do as I wish, even to the smallest detail or the most extravagant eccentricity. The moment my moods jar you, leave me, but never remonstrate."

Hamilton looked out of the window. They rattled through narrow streets, across the brilliant, crowded Champs Elysées, into the stoned rue de Bas-

sano.

"I only want to say this," he said, as he laid his hand on the cab handle. "A boat whose balance is all on one side is likely to capsize. Trim yourself to meet any sudden winds, for they are inevitable to a nature like yours, and, once turned, you will sink."

Eva's brows knitted; she followed him to the pavement. "I have listened," she said. "But I never wish to hear anything of the sort again. Spare me your advice in

future; this is all I ask."

She was watching the concierge take her bags from the imperial; Hamilton was studying her.

"May I come for you this evening?"
"No; I want to fit myself in here

"When, then?"

"I shall let you know."

"You are annoyed?"

"I have no patience with a person who treads twice on the same foot."

He seemed puzzled how to reply, and ended by saying awkwardly: "I know—by Jove! Well, au revoir until the spirit moves you! I see there is no use appealing for clemency. But—

I am sorry! Don't let the week stretch out before you send for me."

"The Elysées?"

"Yes."

"I shall write you; good-bye."

"Thanks; good-bye.

III

THE pension, after six days' acquaintance, proved better than she had expected. There was the inevitable all-knowing, while hopelessly ignorant, American element-predominantly female; the eccentric old Englishwoman and sharp-nosed, eyeglassed spinster tourist; the jolly abbé and musical aspirant. The hostess was a woman worthy of better place, a very pearl for Paris where landladies are a scourge. Eva found amusement in listening to conversations indulged in at the long main table, where Madame Rodinot presided. For herself she had secured a private table, from which she could look into the refreshing green of a collection of palms arranged in a window alcove, at the room's farther end. It was all very new and interesting; and although the loud voice and not irreproachable diction of a California widow often grated upon her, the unfamiliarity of it all acted as a tonic, made her imagine herself a girl again, inexperienced and preparing to fight her way through the

She dressed quietly, that she might not attract too much attention, for, though the people were entertaining at a distance, she felt that closer contact would chafe. The pension was composed of five flats, that made it possible to live quite independently of the inmates, whom she saw only at meal-times and with whom she had as yet had no intercourse.

She found it amusing to fit up her rooms on the second étage; there was a certain novel charm in choosing with economy, in stretching fifty francs over an area wherein she was accustomed to spend a thousand indifferently. It was something to do,

and kept her so absorbed during those six days that she wholly forgot Hamilton.

She worked unflaggingly, rushing feverishly from Bon Marché to the Louvre; hammering nails in the walls herself; blending colors; upholstering; sewing; arranging flowers and palms.

When it was all done she sat in the midst of her pretty boudoir and felt her heart sink like a stone. There was nothing more to do! Why had she done it? The draperies, the pictures, the silent bits of furniture seemed to speak loneliness. She felt she had already dragged out a long, empty life in those rooms; they bore the stamp of a deserted woman, a personality so unlike herself-a lean widow in black, with dull eyes and a resigned, halfbitter expression—a creature with no place in the world and no love for it. She had come to this!-a mediocre female with no future and a vague past wherein there were no strong high lights, nothing that made her feel she had once really lived. For even those three years of love and gaiety appeared now like a period of waiting-a happy, trustful waiting for something that never came.

She went to the inevitable mirror over the mantel and looked with cold horror into the pale face it reflected. Never had the lines appeared so real and distinct. She was getting old! She was deliberately losing her hold upon youth, and for what? Something must be done; she must get out of herself. She thought of Hamilton, and grew faint with a sort of moral

nausea.

She sat down by the open fire and tried to think it out, forcing herself to face the situation honestly.

Was she grieving for Winstanley? Did she love him still? Her answer was that she despised him. All his cruelty stood out hideously, stirring a desire for vengeance that made her pace the room. Why could she not become interested in Hamilton—in anything? Was it rage and pique that had brought about this sense of moral dislocation, this incompleteness

of being, this desire to lie low and let the world and life slip by her? She wished that she had kept one photograph of her husband, that she might more distinctly recall the familiar face whose smallest characteristic had once been so deeply engraved on her heart. Now her memory of it was disguised by the effect of her own thoughts; she knew it was not a true portrait, and it fretted her. If she could only get some interest in life, some real interest! Here she was in Paris, the centre of art; why should she not take up something—painting, sculpture?

She again pictured herself the widow

She again pictured herself the widow in black, growing old with a hobby, joining the vast army of disappointed women, long in the tooth, sallow and meek, who turn to art as a dernier resort and fill in the empty hours and years with tireless labor that never rises above the mediocrity that yearly adds to earth's great burden. She

shuddered.

She felt at her feet the black chasm to whose brink women who dare to look upon life independently, whose sensitive intuition feels a reality beyond the fog of popular dictation, are brought on learning that the star they saw beyond is but the reflected brightness of their own eyes. To such natures pain that penetrates to the soul awakes an acute appreciation of things and develops an appetite that can

never be appeased.

No man can ever comprehend that intense moment when the element he has sensed and succumbed to in a woman is, by his bungling hand, rushed to premature development. The normal woman is a centre of passion, or, rather, of that indefinable essence of life for which we have no name. But once the delicate mechanism is jarred, the cup tilted from its natural poise, the treasure either congeals or seethes to poison. No one can ever paint that life within life—the invisible woman, sensitive and fragile as the veins in the stem of a flower, and as important to her existence.

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She sat for a long time trying to think, while mentally facing the vacancy that in the hour of real sorrow envelops humanity like a return of the First Day, with nothing promised and nothing to forget. Upon this vacancy the prolonged, sharp buzz of an electric bell announced the dressing hour. As it continued with maddening persistency, she covered her ears. The prospect of descending again to that crowded dining-room, with its heavy atmosphere and hum of illiterate English and nasal French, revolted her. There had come a distaste for her surroundings, a terrified sense of being out of the world to which she belonged. Poverty meant nothing; enough was sufficient; she never pictured herself as poor. But this sudden ostracism-this loneliness! She hastily lighted the gas and went to her desk. She would have Hamilton take her out to dinner-some place amusing-Maxim's, where they could see the life of Paris!

When halfway through her short note there was a knock at the door, and the maid entered with a letter

from him.

As Eva read it her desire vanished. There was in the words an undertone of impatience to see her. She could tolerate no demands that could, even in the least, threaten the absorbing egotism of her own grief. She wrote coolly in reply that she was busy and

did not wish to go out.

After having tea and toast in her room she ordered a closed cab—the only sort to be had at that season-and drove for two hours up and down the Champs Elysées, from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place de la Concorde and back. It calmed her to watch the steady rush of life, the blaze of illumination; to hear the continued beat of hurrying hoofs on the wood, and the jingle of bells. It gave an elevated character to her sorrow to be thus alone, outside of the gay life of the world. There came to her a great yearning, a desire to be good, to do good, to devote her life to some high and worthy cause. A lump rose in her throat; tears gathered, and threw back long strips of light to the tall lamps. She reveled in a sort of ecstatic yielding to morbid impressions that never reached the completeness of definite thought. There was pleasure in this because her trouble was beyond her comprehension and comprised the

fascination of mystery.

The next morning, as she read letters from New York in which the writers—women—embroidered upon the triumphs and delights of their existence in the wild whirl once so familiar to her, someone in the room above started singing scales in a high, throaty soprano. As she had not heard it before, Eva concluded it was the voice of a new lodger, and wondered to which of the fourteen unfavored females at the long table it could be attributed.

Though the same notes were repeated over and over again, the sound did not irritate her; she found herself interested in listening, especially when the singer finally launched into the

opening act of "Faust":

"Non, monsieur, je ne suis demoiselle, ni belle."

It was not a sympathetic voice, nor in any way worthy to essay the interpretation of that sublime stanza, yet Eva became interested in marking the corrections made, the method of taking the notes, and wondered whether she could not do as well, whether it would not be worth her while to try.

She sang over the words, and there was in her voice such a warmth and depth of feeling that it brought tears

to her eyes. Why not do it?

She started up and paced the room, burning with impatience. She would develop a voice; she would sing; she would interpret with full ardor and passion all that was lying panting within her; she would make the world hear her, and learn it; and he—Winstanley?

When the second buzz of the electric bell told her dinner was served she descended, impatient to see the singer, to learn how one should take

up the work.

It was not long before Eva discov-

ered her at the end of the long table The California nearest her own. widow was soon loudly in conversation with the singer. She called her Miss Wallace, and paid her some pedantic compliments upon her voice.

"I don't see as there's a real good singer in Paris," she was saying. "Look at the grand opera here. My, we wouldn't stand that sort of screechin' in Amurica! Why, they'd be hissed off the stage! Then how's it run? Those gawky women follerin' you around as though they owned the whole show, and demandin' money at every turn. Goodness! I've never seen such leeches! And the accommodations! I can just tell you this, people say Amurica is dear, but you get your money's worth over there, I tell you! Here you pay eight francs for a seat in a box, and you find yourself crowded up with a lot of strangers with hats on big enough to cover the whole stage. If you think that's worth payin' for, I don't. Everything is extra; fifty centimes here a frage there! It amounts to here, a franc there! It amounts to the same thing in the long run, and you get nothin' for it."

"Oh, there are some good singers even here," returned Miss Wallace, in a smooth English voice, which, although slightly flavored with Cockney, was a relief after the high ejaculations of the Californian. She was tall and so thin as to appear raw-boned, the face long and sunken, the eyes somewhat prominent, but large and brilliant. They were delicately blackened and the high cheekbones rouged with a daring that seemed out of place in one whose predestined condition appeared to be clearly spinster propriety. The fair hair, coiffed and tinted in the French style, grew prettily about a low brow, and was Eng-

lishly neat.

"Who are The Californian sniffed.

they, I'd like to know?"

"Ackté is one, and Madame Bréval another, at the grand opera; and Adelaide Fulton at the Comique."

"Oh, Fulton, yes; she's good. But she's an Amurican. My! how she

spins the notes out in 'Manon'! I guess they'll never have another like her there. They say she isn't much liked, either, by those Frenchwomen. I guess they have many a row."

"I should fancy, being American, she'd be above that!" remarked an old

Englishwoman opposite.

"It's all rubbish," said Miss Wallace. "She never has a tiff, and, what's more, her head is not in the least bit turned. I know her quite

"You know her?"

"Yes, it was she who introduced me to Monsieur Cavalier. He taught

"But she's a woman of-no repu-

tation, isn't she?"

"I know nothing about that. She's probably as good as most women in Paris; and she is certainly a jolly sight more amusing than any I've met, and one of the cleverest-

Oh, I've heard so many stories-"They say the King of Greece is devoted to her, besides the man-

"Yes, she holds her place as much

through favoritism as-

"Oh, what stuff! Her voice is enough!"

All at the long table were now speaking at once in loud voices, and in the hubbub Eva could hear nothing, though keen interest made her strain for what Miss Wallace said. She determined to speak to her, and, when the repast was finished, followed the others into the small, overcrowded drawing-room.

She had never before entered the room, and as her eye traveled over its superabundance of furniture, the inevitable handsome bronze clock and candelabra, the impressive pastel of the daughter of the house, the walled sofa and chairs, prints and chromos, she wondered if it were typical of

pensions.

The occupants were even more heterogeneous. A dark-skinned Haytian was showing his collection of postcards to a Swedish girl; an Irish woman, of the clever-eyed, largenosed type, was preparing to play cards with a faded Austrian; two South Americans, a Spanish woman and an Englishman were gathered about the fire; Miss Wallace, the Californian and a French countess stood in an uncertain group conversing loudly with several others.

Eva turned over the leaves of a guest book until she saw Miss Wallace approach the fire, and, on the pretense of warming herself, she followed

Strangely enough she felt less at her ease than she had ever felt in company before. In entering drawingrooms occupied by people of her own class she had never known the slightest twinge of self-consciousness; in acting as hostess to important foreign dignitaries, in receiving en masse the most critical of New York's smartest folk, during the ordeal of her presentations at the courts of England and Germany, she had never experienced the discomfort she endured beneath the curious and surreptitious scrutiny of these pensionnaires. It was the instinctive shrinking of antagonism; the terror of the proud peacock amid the cackling, wondering fowls of the barnyard; the diffidence of a foreigner in an unfamiliar country.

"I think I heard you singing this morning," she said, as genially as she could, while stretching her hands to the fire. "You are studying here?"

Miss Wallace gave her a quick glance from the corner of her eyes: then, turning her face aside as though to hide some disfigurement, replied sharply:

"Yes, I am."

"It must be very interesting. Have you been studying long?"

"Oh, yes; five years. I finished in the spring."

"How happy you must be!"

"Yes, it's jolly to feel the bothering part is over."

Eva looked into the fire; she longed to have her to herself for a few moments. Miss Wallace arranged the neat white frill at her wrists.

"Paris is probably the very best

place to study," remarked Eva, to hold the subject.

"It is understood to be, but there's no end of rubbish here."

"How do you mean?" "They teach such rot!"

"Oh, really? One must be careful? I am glad you told me."

"You are studying?"

"No; but I am thinking of taking it up - not professionally, but for my own pleasure. I should like to know more about your master. Won't you come up to my room? There's a fire there, and we can talk more com-

They had a few moments' chat about music before a soothing wood fire. With unnecessary tactfulness she gradually brought the conversation about to Adelaide Fulton, and, after learning a few insignificant points concerning her-diffidence preventing her investigating too minutely—she arranged to visit the singer the following afternoon with Miss Wallace, who was quite sure Adelaide would be delighted to know her.

"It will interest me immensely to meet her," said Eva. "You are sure she does not object to meeting women?"

"Oh, certainly! Why should she?" "I have always heard she considers only men worthy of her time. She has them all at her feet, has she not?"

"Oh, she has admirers, of course; but she likes women, though she takes jolly good care to know only the right sort."

"You say she was never married?"

"No, never; though she has had the best of opportunities. There is a millionaire from your side who would marry her tomorrow. He is daft about her, and such a nice fellow! Just now he is away, but is returning soon."

Eva felt the color creeping into her face; her throat seemed choked. She leaned over to arrange a log. "Amer-

ican, did you say?"

"Yes; from New York, I fancy-I've forgotten the name. Wordsworth -no; something like that. He gives her presents worth fortunes."

"Winstanley?" queried Eva clearly, in spite of the throbbing in her throat, and still bending low as she dug tongs into a log.

"That's it-Winstanley! You've heard of the affair over there, even? A ripping chap! Awfully good-looking, and generous as a lord."

Eva felt she had gone white. She dared not let the girl see her face. Her arms and legs had grown cold and numb, and seemed incapable of movement. To hear that name spoken thus, to know it was upon the lips of the lowest gossip-monger in connection with this woman, stunned her, although she had been prepared.

Fearing the silence she could not break might excite her visitor's curiosity, she lifted the log and let it drop.

"These are so heavy," she whispered.

Miss Wallace leaned forward. "Let me do it."

Eva seized the chance to get into the rear of the room, on the pretense of closing the door to her bedchamber. She felt dazed and aged. Her husband, the man she had given the best of her life to—the freshest, purest love any woman could give! She knew the horror of it was stamped upon her face, and was afraid to reveal it. She moved about, touching things here and there.

"I shall have a piano brought up," she said when Miss Wallace had arranged the fire. "I shall have it there, don't you think?"

Miss Wallace, rising, regarded the spot indicated, and expressed her approval; whereupon Eva called her attention to a vase she had purchased the day before, and swiftly to other things; cushions, picture-frames -anything to prevent her face being scrutinized.

When the girl left her she locked the door and returned to her chair by the fire. There she sat, her hands supporting her chin until the flames died in gray ashes. She did not think distinctly of Winstanley; more of Adelaide Fulton and of her own inability to hold him hers. What was the charm? What did this woman give that she had denied him? She tried to picture the singer. From the little she had gleaned she saw her tall and ravishingly thin; a white, interesting face, with strange eyes, burning, indefinable, deeply set, beautiful. The hands-Miss Wallace had spoken particularly of them-thin and white, and suggesting subtle power. She compared herself with the picture, and beside it she seemed small and insignificant, an ordinary woman-a candle beside a witch's flame.

THEY went in the morning, for Miss Fulton never received women after luncheon. Her apartment was the entresol of one of the familiar, wideportaled mansions on the rue Boëtie. The door was opened by a neat, keeneyed maid, who ushered them, with an air of conferring a favor, across a narrow hallway into a small, exquisitely appointed drawing-room à l'Empire, in color pale sage green, with one or two strikingly beautiful paintings and rough drawings covering the wider wall spaces, and on the floor, leaning carelessly against the wainscoting, a large, half-finished pastel that bore the unmistakable imprint of a master hand. There were few draperies, a superb piano, several rarely lovely flowering plants and some bits of irreproachable marble and bronze.

Miss Wallace made a remark about the room, but Eva did not hear it. She was inwardly tremulous and anxious. On the card her companion had sent in she had hastily written "Miss Blackwell," fearing to intrust even her maiden name to the custody of this house where he visited; and she awaited the advent of Miss Fulton with as much inward agitation as a girl awaits the

coming of her lover.

She heard a step, and braced herself to greet her. It was the maid returning to say Miss Fulton was in bed, and begged that they would go to her there.

Does she-realize that you are not

alone?" asked Eva, as she followed the English girl.

"Oh, yes. She doesn't mind that. Bed is the same as drawing-room to

After a swift knock, she pushed open a door at the farther end of the hallway, and revealed a dainty boudoir in soft pink and white; a bed embellished with delicate silk curtains and canopy; more flowers; a toilet-table blazing with costly articles in silver, enamel and mother-of-pearl; luxuriant chairs and rugs—all sweetly fragrant and delightfully neat.

Eva's eyes swept to the bed; on the way they fell upon a man in riding clothes, seated upon an upholstered stool near the bedside, beating his leg impatiently with a crop. As they entered he arose and bowed solemnly. Eva looked past him toward the woman in bed, bolstered upon mountains

of rosy pillows.

She was startled. How unlike what she had imagined! The eyes indeed were strange: round, greenish, scintillating, but for the rest a worn, faded face, dry and intersected with lines and sunken beneath high cheekbones. A short crop of stiff, oxygenized hair fell about shoulders whose leanness was clearly visible through the soft, rose-colored peignoir; the mouth, rose-colored peignoir; the mouth, though well formed and agreeable, was wide and unyouthful. It was the face of a woman considerably her senior, a woman who had lived rapidly, and obedient to no law but that of common sense, and who had wisely kept herself within the bounds of that law. In viewing her one forgot the lack of beauty under the charm of interest. She represented an individual selfcreation rather than a woman.

As she greeted Miss Wallace, her

eyes were upon Eva.

"You know I am singing tonight, yet you come—daring devil!" she said, with clear enunciation and a slight foreign accent.

"I had forgotten," returned Miss Wallace apologetically. "It is good of you to receive us. This is Miss Blackford," Eva saw in the wide eyes that the difference in the name had been noted, but was too trivial to be commented upon.

"I appreciate very much your receiving me, a stranger," she murmured, "and hope you will not let us

tire you."

"Oh, no; in bed I am never tired. It will freshen me to talk to someone new. Find chairs, won't you? This is Mr. Perrot." Then, in French: "You had better go now, Pierre. You've worried me enough for one day."

day."
"When shall I see you again?"
"How do I know? If I could predict that with certainty I might know where I shall be when I'm sixty—a question of much greater impor-

tance."

"To you, perhaps."

"Yes, to me. I certainly cannot spend precious time considering you just at present. Be off!"

"I shall come at four this afternoon."
"No, you shall not! Are you mad?
Pierre, don't provoke me! I ask you
to keep away from me today."

"Tomorrow morning, then?" He had risen, and stood looking down at her with haggard, hungry eyes.

Adelaide brushed her hair back, causing a reckless exposure of high forehead. "You madden me! For God's sake try to remember that I never want to see you the days I sing in the evening. I have told you so often!"

"Tomorrow at eleven?"

"Yes. Good-bye!"

They touched hands, and Mr. Perrot, with a low bow to the others, withdrew.

Miss Fulton's glance fell once more

critically upon Eva.

"You speak French, do you not?" she asked, and on learning that she did expressed satisfaction, as she felt herself much more at ease in that language.

"Miss Blackford is going to study with Cavalier," remarked the English

giri.

"Ah? Professionally?"

"Oh, no," said Eva; "merely as a pastime."

"You like it?"
"I adore it."

During this short colloquy their eyes had held each other, and the singer's had changed shape, narrowing and elongating with critical reflection. It was not the conventional analysis of social criticism, but the interested and comprehending scrutiny of a brain educated in the realities of life. In spite of herself. Eva felt drawn to the woman. The very fact that her power over Winstanley could be traced to none of the recognized traits of feminine fascination absorbed and puzzled her. She felt her charm without being able to define it. She was the perfection of personal cleanliness, her surroundings were bewitching, but she bore the indelible stamp of low birth, and showed in every movement a woman of educated rather than innate refinement, even of the senses.

After a few more questions she gave Eva some good advice about voice culture—important points that she would probably not have acquired in less than two years' study with the average teacher; she even asked her to come again, after seeing Cavalier, and tell her his opinion of her voice.

"You have one, that is certain," she said. "Every healthful woman, who is neither morally nor physically stunted, has a voice; only some lack the necessary intelligence, others the right quality of heart and soul vibration. It doesn't matter to what heights we leap or to what depths we sink, Miss Blackwell, that vibration must be there if we wish to succeed in anything. It is the magic oil that lubricates the wheels of life." As she spoke, she touched an electric bell near her bed.

"Margarete," she said to the maid,
"I want rice for dinner; and tell her to
be careful to have it dry as—as—well,
dry; you understand?"

"Yes, madame."

On returning home Eva tried to define to herself the impression left upon her by this woman; but it was intangible, inexplicable. She was interested, even charmed, but why? In describing her, what quality could she cite in explanation? Frankness, perhaps; but so many people are frank nowadays!

She tried to put herself in Winstanley's place, to ascertain just how she had acquired her power over him. But now, away from her, with the unlovely face, the thin, nervous hands and bony shoulders more present than the spell of the woman's personal atmosphere,

she could not comprehend it.

The futility of trying to think it out alone wearied her. Her surroundings seemed to accentuate a lacking and a weakness in herself. She felt some unfamiliar fact hovering over her, and grew impatient to grasp and understand it, to talk to someone, to get beyond the limits of herself. Then she sent for Hamilton to take her out.

They went to Ritz to dine, and later had coffee served them in a cozy private room with deep chairs and an open fire. Hamilton was decorously attentive. He concealed the frantic pleasure of having her thus to himself, as he concealed the reproaches that had been seething in his heart during their separation. Unrequited love makes one so keenly alive to all the passing whims and moods of the being loved that there is a certain satisfaction to be derived from studiously striving to avoid jarring them. Being wise enough to realize how little his feelings could interest her, he sought merely to amuse and enliven.

As Eva sipped her coffee she suddenly asked: "Do you know whom I went to see today?"

"No; whom?"
"Adelaide Fulton."

Hamilton's eyes opened; he observed her wonderingly.

"How did you go to see her?"

"A co-pensionnaire took me to her

house. We had a long talk; she has asked me to come again."

She looked into her cup briefly, drank the contents and set it down.

A soft light came into the man's

"What do you think of her?" he

asked, adopting her easy tone.

"Think? I think her unique. She was a shock, but there is a fascination. What it is I can't grasp."

"I must say I fail to see it, except her voice. That is splendid."

"Have you ever talked with her?"

"Yes."
"Alone?"

"No; but I have heard her talk to—people. I think I have seen her at times at her best. All I can say is that she is refreshing because unusual, and her naturalness startles one to interest, after the familiar type of approved society."

"No; I don't think it is that. In the first place, there are many original characters to be met with in New York drawing-rooms. Originality is

the ruling pose of the hour.

"Yes, and society is therefore a collection of studied caricatures! Education has destroyed real individuality, and instead we are all miserably struggling to realize the popular ideal."

"That is just it! This is the reason we pall so-the effort and study are too great; this everlasting living according to published theories or 'fashion'! The broadcast familiarity with wise maxims created for the few, and now adopted by all, is largely responsible for the loss of individuality; this compiling the wisdom of real thinkers, the deductions arrived at through serious and reliable experience, and making of it a sort of readymade-character stuff that is sold off at so much a column, and made into overalls for every Tom, Dick and Harry! Women who would be interesting in their natural shyness assume a frankness that slaps one in the face at every turn; the vivacious nature, whose impulsiveness would be a relief, struggles to appear like still waters running deep; the spoiled beauty, whose natural selfishness cannot be concealed, apes generosity, until, in a vital moment, the real woman crops out and is a shock to the man she has married, who hates selfishness; whereas another man might have loved the real woman for her very faults, and, being rightly mated, the faults would have been toned down, or— Can you see what I mean?"

"Perfectly. To me this is the curse of the age. We never know what we are shaking hands with or

whom we are marrying."

Eva was now leaning forward, her

chin in her hands.

"I have been thinking it all over," she said, watching the flame lick into blue excitement about the logs. "Yet even such reasoning does not explain Adelaide Fulton's charm. There is something more—something deeper than our fullest understanding of life."

"She has made a great study of man—I don't mean deliberately!" Then, as he caught Eva's little gesture of disagreement, "Since her earliest womanhood she has been associated with them in every way till, like the practiced pianist, whose fingers find the most intricate chords instinctively, she strikes the right notes upon whatever instrument she essays to play."

Eva sat thinking. He watched the pale profile with the soft firelight upon it; the pensive fall and rise of the lashes told him she was absorbed in reflections wherein he figured not at all, and it caused him an irritation so poignant that he almost longed to get

away from her.

He stretched his legs impatiently,

and the movement roused her.

"There is a good deal in that!" she said; "and yet, why should not the unwearying study of one man lead to the same result, so far as that one man is concerned?"

His impulse was to say, "Oh, damn it all! I don't know," for he knew she was but making use of him. Instead, he let his head fall in his hands, and sat silent.

"There is the contradiction of your theory," she added. "You can say nothing?" She glanced at him appealingly, anxious for some retort that might help her to beat the matter out.

Oh, it's different!" he ventured, revealing a little his distaste for the

argument.

She leaned back in her chair and regarded his wide shoulders with dissatisfaction. After a moment she sat up and said quietly: "I must go now."

Hamilton jerked about. "Go? Why,

it's not ten o'clock!"

"I know, but you are not in a mood to interest me tonight."

"How? Why? Good heavens! What do you want me to do?"

"Nothing; only take me back."

As she rose he followed her, the blood rushing hot to his temples with dread of losing her, of having this sweet solitude with her so abruptly curtailed.

"Don't do this," he pleaded; "I am in a mood for—anything you like. Jove! what did I do? Oh, I say, don't break up our chat like this! What

did I do?"

There was something almost boyish in his remorseful eagerness and anxious searching for the right thing to say, a boyishness with which she had no patience. In his eyes was a burning warmth that irritated her, as the love a woman cannot return always irritates. His very largeness and good looks, the sense of his masculinity, the knowledge that his deepest nature was centered upon her, making unspoken demands, craving what belonged to another, what she never wished to withdraw from that other, made her wish to be rid of him.

"Oh, don't tire me!" she said fretfully. "Get my wraps and come, or

-let me go alone."

He put his hands in his pockets and looked at her in troubled perplexity.

"Where are they?" she asked, glanc-

ing about the room.

"I'll ring for them, but—" He walked slowly to the fire and threw his cigarette in.

"Please do," she said.

"It is so jolly here. You'll be lonely there. Oh, stay on a bit; we'll

talk things out. Do it for charity. I'm—bored; not a dog to speak to here, not a—"

"Oh, don't try to appeal to my generosity, for I haven't any. If I were to remain it would be for my own sake, because I dread being alone, because I want to talk to someone. As a rule you enter into things with some zest;

but tonight-"

"Oh, I shall! Listen—you don't understand me. I was thinking. A man can't talk off like a book. I'm no fledgling, you know. I've had my hours of reflection. Do you want me to answer you like a schoolboy—a copy-book?"

"You know what I want. I want you to give the subject we discuss your

attention, not me."

"I know, and I was doing so; for——"

"You were not! Don't treat me like a child."

"My thoughts wandered but an instant. The subject is as attractive to me as to you. It's a thing I have always wanted to discuss with someone interested; I don't think you could have found me in a mood more suitable for it."

Eva was looking through him and thinking. "Listen," she said; "if I remain I want to tell you, once for all, that our association must always be in the abstract. It interests me to talk to you merely as a means of unburdening myself and helping me to reach conclusions. It seems to me unfair to you, but—I am not considering others just now. If you are wise you will let me leave you now, and you will return to England or America."

Hamilton took a fresh cigarette. "It's all in a lifetime," he said in an undertone, as he rolled it. "What does it matter to what it leads?" He lighted the cigarette, inhaled a volume of smoke and looked at the ceiling while breathing it out. His voice was not so steady as he added: "To me the hour counts, not the future. I'd rather spend one week in the open field of battle, and drop on the seventh day to the touch of a bullet, than shut

myself in some place of security for a lifetime, eating my heart out."

"That is not the only alternative," said Eva, returning to her chair. "Remember, the world is wide and women many."

"Yes, too many!" he replied, with a little laugh born of his delight in seeing her again installed near him.

Eva sank back languidly. "And the world often too wide!" she said reflectively.

"If it were only the size of this

Immediately he regretted the words that had escaped him impulsively, and to efface them before she could comment or move he leaned over and dug the fire. "What a beastly poor affair, this fire! Reminds me of the conflagrations we used to cook our grub on in South Africa on a rainy night. There, that's better, isn't it, eh?" He looked at her critically, wondering if she had noticed his first remark.

Her satisfaction in being there with the privilege of giving voice to thoughts just as they came to her, and having them met and replied to by a capable intellect, was too great to permit her to heed the slip. She pretended to be absorbed in thought.

"I want you to tell me something truthfully," she said presently; and Hamilton, relieved and happy again, listened with all attention, forgetting everything but that she was there beside him, inclosed in that little space with at least two hours before them. "This social disguise, this moral straining and effort, is it as distinctly a part of me as it is of the rest?"

In recognizing the question to be wholly out of keeping with her nature, Hamilton felt the responsibility of his reply, knowing that if he laughed her mistake would be brought home to her. He deliberated while flicking ashes into the fire.

"With you it is a coat you adopt at will," he said, "a domino you assume when among dominos. The self you reveal to intimates is entirely devoid of it."

Eva was thoughtful. "With intimates? With you, perhaps, but—"

He did not help her; in that moment all his elation died. His position toward her seemed to stand out with more distinctness; he remembered the words she had spoken a few moments before, and though they had told him nothing new, the sense of being coldly and indifferently used as an instrument to aid in dissecting her fault in relation to Winstanley lowered his courage. He felt unable at once to rise above the deadly depression that had settled upon him, and, dreading another direct question, he left his seat.

"May I indulge in a whisky-and-soda?" he asked, approaching the bell. "Do you mind?"

"Not in the least; why should I?"
Then, when he was again seated, she added: "It doesn't appear that we are the least bit nearer solving the problem we started out with than we were when we began."

"No; do you think we can ever solve

"Not unless you give it more

The servant came to the door; Hamilton gave his order, and sat waiting. Eva was waiting, too, or, rather, wondering if he were going to help her. But, after all, wasn't it a subterfuge to wait? Why not ask him deliberately why he did not help? But what charm would there be in such crudeness? The veriest Hottentot might indulge in that.

"There must be a certain finesse," she said, obeying her thoughts. "It is nonsense to say it is attractive for one to turn oneself inside out for the

observation of every eye."
"Every eye, no," returned Hamilton, making a place on a little table for the siphon and whisky now brought and inwardly quaking with the knowledge that he was not the least in a mood to discuss metaphysics, though he looked to the whisky to help him.

When the servant had departed Eva said: "Let us return to our muttons! We were discussing Adelaide Fulton's charm. I shall display my vast fund of frankness by stating at once that I am particularly interested in dissecting it; nor am I ashamed to acknowledge this, because I am obliged to recognize her charm to be real,

though inexplicable."

Hamilton drank the contents of his glass, then leaned forward to watch the fire. He knew he would be wiser to reflect than to speak hastily and perhaps miss the mark. But try as he might his brain would not lend itself to the subject in question. One thought was always uppermost, persistent and absorbing: why did she cling so tenaciously to the memory of one who had shown himself both selfish and inappreciative—a man who had insulted her by the preference he took no pains to hide, who was as unworthy of her as-

"Are you thinking of what I said?" she asked, looking at him critically.

"Of course I am! It is a subject for thought. I have often pondered over it." His tongue began to loosen; he was gradually getting himself under control. "There have been women who in my collected moments I despised, whose appearance, characteristics and ideas revolted me when I was away from them, and yet in whose presence I was as helpless as a feather in a windstorm."

"Ah, but that is another sort of thing! Everyone recognizes there is

animal magnetism."

"Yes; but there was one who was physically repulsive to me, who nevertheless swayed me while I was with her. In thinking it over I traced it to a certain quick intelligence, a sort of intuitive understanding of me! My smallest impulse, my labored and floundering sentences, she grasped and comprehended at once; she knew-

"Ah, that is more Adelaide Fulton's power!-the quick intelligence."

"Why not call it good training, and revert to my snubbed suggestion concerning her knowledge of men?"

"Because it is not a deliberate utilization of training. I can't accept that. An intelligence quickened by experience, yes; but there is something finer back of her influence than the methodical use of that knowledge." After a short silence she said, partly in soliloguy: "The vanity of the one desired stands largely for or against our chances of winning; that is why a quick intelligence forms the foundation of elective affinity. The instinct of the woman flatters the vanity of the man, and starts the flame that unites them; and yet"-she looked at him critically-"I

have never flattered."

In meeting his eyes she recognized her mistake, the unfeelingness of the blunder she was about to make. The color fled quickly from his face, but she leaned over to throw into the fire a match he had dropped, saying quite easily: "That doesn't explain it, either. There are different sorts of attraction between the sexes; and what we call love is not the strongest, though it is the most natural. Cleopatra's influence over Antony was not the effect of love, any more than was Napoleon's influence over his soldiers, or-Well, what do you think?"

Hamilton lighted a cigarette. "I

was listening," he said calmly. "I know, but I don't want you to listen; I want you to talk. Tell me what you think; I know what I think, and I've had enough of it."

"You mean about-?"

"Oh, nothing! It is uphill work. We are no farther than when we began. . . You were much more interested in things during the voyage than you are now. Has Paris blunted your ideas?"

"Perhaps. But remember you did not ply me with the deepest of moral

problems during the voyage."
Eva laughed. "I know; what nonsense I am talking! Do you know, I begin to think I am only half developed! I believe most men and women die undeveloped. There is an inner identity we never probe to the core; we use it as a dummy on which

to hang our self-created egos!"

Hamilton was relieved by the change of mood, and in sheer gladness echoed her laugh. "What a second-hand clothing shop we shall look like, then,

at the Day of Judgment!" he ex-

claimed.

Eva was still laughing, her head thrown back, her half-closed eyes catching dancing lights from the fire. "What a surprise show to our fellows who knew us always white, and then see us black!"

"Well, the worst of us will serve the future this much-we will give the dull people in heaven something to remember and gossip about while we

are frizzling."

"Do you think you will frizzle?"

"Oh, without a doubt, if we are to be judged according to the Scrip-

tures."

"The Scriptures—yes!" Then, after a short silence: "Think of that life going on in New York-the same endless succession of aimless gaiety, the same women growing old in an effort to rival one another.

"The same children maturing to another era of madness! After all, it's a gay madness, instead of a stupid one, like breaking stones in the road,

"Did you tell me you had been ten years in the States?'

"Yes, ten long years, and not easy

ones, either."

"Well, why in the world did one

never hear of you?"

"Because I belonged to the America you society folk know nothing of; I was ranching."
"Ranching! What for?"

"Bread and sausage. Being a second son, I had to knock up against it until four years ago, when my brother died."

"And you rose up from the ashes a glorious phenix, with title and estates? Was the metamorphosis unalloyed?"

"Yes; I hardly knew him; and he

never wanted to know me." After a moment, "I don't think there is much family affection among

the English, is there?"

Hamilton's face softened. "I don't know," he said looking pensively into the fire. "There was one member of my family I loved better than myself. Then, I loved my parents,

though I knew them such a short time.

"Who is the member?"

"My sister."

In the abrupt utterance there was contained a warmth and softness that he had never revealed before, and Eva was briefly interested and curious.

"I never knew you had a sister," she

"I haven't now. She died two years ago—just when I got her home, and she might have known happiness for the first time in her poor life.

"Wasn't your brother good to her?" "Good! She bored him, probably. She was noble, but not pretty; too high-strung to endure the dependence she was made to feel. She took a false step, and he let her slip down.

He leaned forward to the fire, his hands pressed together, a line, that came only in moments of intense feeling, cutting his brow. "It took me two years to find her; she had drifted to Canada. I worked my way there and persuaded her to come with me to the ranch. On the way she escaped me, leaving a note to say she would kill herself if I followed. She had got a place on the variety stage. It was only pluck and pride. She didn't want to be a weight on me when I'd nothing, but I'd- Well, she's one of the good ones gone!"

"And your brother was a million-

aire?"

"He became one, yes. Married money and accumulated it."

"No children? That was a good

turn of luck for you."

"Yes, but it came too late for her!" The fire crackled against silence for a few moments. Eva looked reflectively at him, as he leaned forward with elbows on knees. He had never appeared so human to her, nor so alive with good, substantial manli-

"Why don't you marry?" she said. He sat perfectly still, although the question startled him; then, sitting back, he blew a long whiff of smoke. "Oh, I don't know."

"You should, you know. You

would make some woman very happy, for you've had the right training." She arose as she spoke, because the situation had assumed a certain confidential comfortableness that she began to be conscious of, and the real, cold misery of her own life stood out with sudden distinctness in comparison.

He sprang to his feet, his face blank

with disappointment.

"You are going so soon?"

"Yes; it is late."

He looked at his watch. "Only fifteen after eleven."

"That is late enough; and I am decided."

V

Eva saw Adelaide Fulton several times during the following weeks, and she allowed Hamilton to take her out now and again, when the routine of lessons and sightseeing with Miss Wallace became unendurable without some break.

She realized that this spasmodic association with a man already in love with her was but sinking him more hopelessly in the entanglement from which he had refused to extricate himself. She suffered no self-reproach. She herself was floundering against difficult tides in an unknown sea, aiming for a goal she could not so much as name and dared not attempt to comprehend. He helped her to breathe above the level of her misery, to watch the horizon for something, she knew not what. There was even a sort of wicked satisfaction in knowing she could hurt him. She had been hurt, crushed, shattered, when innocent of any wrong but too great love; why should she consider others?

Her voice was the only pleasure these days contained for her. It was rapidly developing into something to be proud of, something that gave her hope—of

what?

He might hear it some time! He should hear it! And then—it should be brought to a perfect state, obedient to her feelings as a bow to the will of

a practiced hand! . . . Why had her love left no impression upon him? She had lived for him, breathed for him since the hour he had first taught her to love him. She had borne him a son; and he had been absent eight months when the child died. He had written beautiful letters to assuage her loss; but the bereavement had been hers alone!

Why did she love him? ... Did she love him? She hated him! And yet— There was something wrong, something lacking in her, or the tragedy would never have occurred. He had needed something she was unable to give, and he had found this in

another!

In cool-headed, unbiased reasoning could she blame him? Would she not have been more miserable had he remained, in obedience to some conventional idea of loyalty, and suffered her to be a patiently endured burden on his life? No! This was better, much better.

She was sitting as she often sat of late, alone in her private sitting-room. The fire had burned itself to gray ashes through which a rosy glow showed dimly. Winstanley seemed very near her this evening; he was part of her again, real, familiar, intimate, stirring anew that sense of completeness which wedded life with the being one loves alone can create. It was as though a paralyzed limb were returning to life and warmth, and she had reveled in this sensation until the truth returned, and thought, and coldness again.

Had he been less independent in his desertion of her, had he not written her those strong, yet pitilessly honest letters when their child died, she could have given him up more easily.

He had never posed as anything but what he was. In the very beginning she had recognized that the calm affection he had given her with his name was not rooted in the strange, deep soul that shone at times in his eyes, and made him appear so very incongruous with the world they lived in. She had worked and struggled to reach that depth, as a novice diver

struggles for a treasure at the ocean's bed, and her efforts, futile and hampered by inexperienced love, had only disturbed the water and rendered the task more difficult. She realized this now; she also understood that she lacked some essential quality that might have enabled her to be in touch with his deeper nature. Hamilton had said to her, a night or two before, that the woman or man who could not arouse a full return of love from any certain being had been misled by chance to love the wrong individual. She had scoffed at the idea, and harked back to her old theory that it was owing to insufficient development in the one who could not obtain a full return. "Any love could be mutually perfect," she had said, "if each could be fully developed to the other. The same law holds in it as in all na-The bud of a flower will come to nothing if each little receptacle for every petal is not sufficiently developed to hold the petal as it unfolds. Love, in its right sense, its most complete sense, is a perfect adjustment of two individuals; every petal of one must find a receptacle in the other."

Now the thought returned to her. Adelaide Fulton had told her she did not believe in mutual love. Her theory was that nature intended woman to attract, but not to love. She considered it unfeminine for women to experience any but maternal love; that love of man, when it rose above mere passion, was as instinctively revolting to a man as mawkish affection from a man is to a woman. She had said, "Man's natural obligation toward woman is to give, woman's toward man to take. In their hearts men prefer loving to being loved, which is a proof

of the natural law."

The more Eva thought it over the more the idea took possession of her. She recalled many instances where wives, learning to love husbands they had accepted indifferently, gradually lost the devotion they had come to depend upon. . . After all, it was a natural law for the male to give: in humanity the law was per-

verted! Women had overstepped. But what was there left if to love were to be denied? Hamilton loved her, yet it gave her no pleasure. The argument was feeble and faulty somewhere.

As a relief, she went to the piano and played through a bar or two of music open on the rack. It was Bohm's "Still Wie die Nacht," a favorite song and one that particularly suited her voice. On reaching the end of the page she went back and sang it softly, then, bursting into full voice, poured out all the pain that was drowning her heart.

When it was finished her head fell forward on her hands. "I can't give him up and live!" she said half aloud. Then a voice within her whispered, "But you have given him up! He is gone. You have as litt! claim upon him as the uttermost stranger!"

There was a knock; it quickly congealed the mood. A swift and unreasoning anger made her hurry to the door. The Californian, arrayed in a magenta bodice, with yellow lace, her long nose accentuated with powder, stood there smiling with a self-satisfied surety of having something to say that would make her welcome.

"That was grand!" she exclaimed.
"I just couldn't sit still till I came in to tell you. It was fine. I tell you, if they had a few voices like yours at the opera they might talk! Why—"

Eva was so taken aback that she could not speak at once, but as the woman made a movement to enter she said, with some asperity:

"It is very good of you, but—you can't come in now. I never receive people in my room."

The Californian stared, and her face hardened. "Oh, I wasn't a-going to force my way. I never do that. I just wanted—but excuse me for troubling you."

Without the slightest qualm of regret for the woman's discomfort Eva closed the door, as she moved away, and locked it. Then, with teeth set, she stood in the middle of the room. Had a man insulted her, or

the whole community in which she lived in New York risen up to defame her, she could not have experienced a moment of more intense hatred of the world. This visit had affected her as a flame would affect a stored magazine. She longed to vent rage on someone, because there was no other outlet possible. She could neither seek solace nor resign herself openly to her grief; pride forbade this; and thus suppressed it was bound to develop with time into a mental disease, since her physical condition was too strong to break under it. There are many situations in life where a delicate physique is a boon.

The next morning she went to see Adelaide Fulton. The singer was engaged with someone in the drawingroom, and sent word for Eva to wait

in her bedroom.

She came in a few moments, her arms full of flowers—long branches of apple blossoms, and lilac sent in moist cotton from Nice, and heaps of Italian violets. She was singing softly as she entered, but her face did not express a happy mood. She looked haggard and older than Eva had ever seen her. The eyes were lightless, the skin dry and lined. She laid the flowers on the bed, then threw two great bunches of violets into Eva's lap.

"The salute of spring!" she said, and without other welcome turned to her toilet-table and took the combs

from her hair.

The thought that she was possibly not welcome crossed Eva's mind vaguely, but did not trouble her. She never felt toward this woman as toward a person, but as a being entirely outside of the conventional world. She neither hated nor liked her, but found an inexplicable satisfaction in being with her, a satisfaction resembling that which one feels in examining some painful excrescence that is mysteriously devouring one's vitality.

She took up some of the violets and breathed them. Miss Fulton shook out her short, oxygenized hair and

began to comb it.

"Why have you come today?" she asked presently.

"No particular reason. If you want

me to go, say so."
"I don't want you to go."

She arranged her hair cleverly, with deft fingers, and returned the three handsome amber combs to their places. Then, with a hand-mirror, she went nearer the window, and rapidly reddened her lips with carmine salve and powdered her face to an interesting pallor. In fastening the collar of her bodice she stood in front of Eva, regarding her curiously.

"You are the only woman I could tolerate about me today," she said, "and yet why I don't know. Do you

like me at all?"

Eva had not lifted her face from the violets. "I never thought about

it," she replied.

The other sat down to put on her boots. "I don't think it is curiosity that brings you to see me," she said. "You never try to sneak into my inner life, as the others do." Then she went on, in a seemingly irrelevant way: "There is only one thing I envy the conventionally correct woman, and that is the flavor law gives to life. I used to scoff at conventionalities, but now I recognize their importance, which is so seldom understood by those who slavishly obey them."

She arose when the boots were finished and put the buttonhook on the table with a bang. "Laws-the narrowest laws, the stupidest conventionalities-are the greatest boon civilized intelligence has yet bestowed on human life. And it is not remorse that prevents the conventionally lawless from being happy. The laws of nature are far stronger than man's, and her greatest law is the prohibition of happiness. Where do you ever see a semblance of it, except in human life that is tied down by limitations? Happiness, after all, is a cultivated emotion, a thing born of restrictions. I often wonder if a bird doesn't enjoy the beauties of the world much more when viewing them through the bars of a cage than when they were freely his

by nature, like his feathers and wings. Did you ever see an animal, or even an uncivilized human being, look really happy? Watch the hunting, hungry anxiety of butterflies and birds; the troubled, dull eyes of free animals; the— But, mon Dieu! why all this talk? You always start me upon harangues! I must go to the theatre a moment; I suppose youwouldn't care to come?"

Eva noticed the slight hesitation, and was uncertain how best to conceal the fact that she was conscious of it. She spoke quickly.

"Do you want me? I should like it

very much."

"Bien! We might spin through the Bois a little, afterward, if you like. The

carriage is closed."

Eva's impulse was to ask what advantage there was in the fact of its being closed, but was deterred by her knowledge of the woman's quick insight. Instead she said: "I'm afraid you will not find me interesting. I haven't an idea, and life is an ugly gray to me today."

"Perhaps that is why the thought of having you appeals to me; we shall be harmonious at least." As she pinned a beautiful flat hat low over her nose and drew a white veil tight about it, she said, still looking into the mirror: "Tell me something; were you ever happy?"

There was a slight delay before the answer came: "Yes; once.

Really happy?"

"Yes, as happy as I should ever want

Miss Fulton was having some difficulty in adjusting the veil. When it was arranged she threw a stole of white fox over her shoulders and looked thoughtfully at Eva. "I often wonder why you are not married," she said. "You are not the sort of woman to be single."

As Eva rose and leaned down to look at a photograph on the table, she still watched her; then, turning abruptly toward the door, exclaimed: "Al-lons! I must be off!"

In the coupé she said: "I wish I

could believe I had ever been happy or ever was likely to be."

"Perhaps your ideal of happiness has grown out of proportion with possibilities; I mean you have always had so much of the sort of thing that interests and delights you that only something extraordinary could now awaken sensation."

"I'm afraid that doesn't explain it. Certainly I now prefer this sort of life to any other; but why? Because once in it one can never shake it off. In the beginning I hated it; I should have been happy to have settled down, as other girls at home did. . . . The hour I most nearly approached happiness was the night of my debut and success here; it was the first moment I took real interest in my work. Since then I have been fighting tides from every direction and of every sort. I have been gorged with excitement, yes; but I have known no happiness-lived on champagne, and starved for wholesome food, so that now I dread the future and distrust the present. . . Today, for instance, I should feel something like happiness; instead I want to blow my brains out!"

Eva glanced at her and saw that the words were not spoken with any desire for dramatic effect. There was a dulness in the eyes and a droop to the lips that, although frequently discernible in moments of abstraction, gave serious significance to the utterance.

I am afraid that unreasoning desire to die is always caused by some physical disorder," she said. "I have had it; but a walk in the sunlight cures me."

"Yes, of course. Everything can be reduced to the flesh in the long run; but it originates in the soul or mind -where you will. You have had troubles, no doubt; one can see that, but at least you still retain a normal view of life. It is not all contorted, drowned in an overdeveloped consciousness of yourself; the wall of selfishness has not grown up about you, blocking all the world out, as it has about me."

"Selfishness?"

"Yes; there is no other word! My

life has made it necessary for me to consider only myself, to depend upon my wit, my inner strength, until it has outgrown everything else, until I have become like a gladiator, accumulating strength and finding my only pleasure in the excitement of overcoming others, never in yielding to them. What is my existence? An endless effort, some excitement, very little real pleasure and no peace! I could not tolerate peace, and yet I often crave it so strongly that at times I would most willingly die. Yet it has been often in my power to have peace—peace and plenty even more."

Eva's heart began to beat swiftly; a question was upon her lips, and without considering she spoke it. "Would you not be happier if—if you married?"

"That is just it! Would marriage better my condition? No! The sense of belonging to someone would drive me to madness; I should make the man miserable, and—I shouldn't care to do that to him."

"Him?"

"I once really loved, when I was—
jeune fille. His people wouldn't have
it, and—I was bought off. It would
have been a great match for me; we
might have been happy. But le père
millionaire does not consider the woman; let her go to the devil as quickly
as possible, so long as the son is safe
from her! . . . Well, he has come
back to me, with all the paternal millions; he would marry me even now."

Eva was looking out of the window; she could feel that the blood had left her face, and dreaded to have it seen. She put her head out and looked down the street, as though interested in some-

thing they had passed.

"He will be here tomorrow," continued Miss Fulton, in the same absorbed way, "and I almost dread it, although—"

"God! Did you-did you see?"

Eva sank back and covered her face with her hands.

"What?" asked the singer, leaning over her quickly.

"A-woman-nearly run over!"
"Oh, la! la! What of that? She

wasn't, so where's the harm? They are forever walking under the wheels! How things affect you! I should never have thought— Dieu! You are white and trembling, as though the thing had really happened."

"It was—so near!" said Eva, brushing her hand across her brow and try-

ing to calm herself.

Adelaide looked at her reflectively, and the other felt that look penetrating to the ache within her. She longed to escape from her at once; she sensed a triumphant and cruel deliberation in the woman's regard, a sudden fierce antagonism maturing between them. She could not meet her eyes, could not look at her. Her very proximity seemed to burn her; fretting all the sensitive fibres of her being, which, in that moment, seemed to be rawly exposed to every passing impression. She would quickly know everything, and pity her-pity her for-

"You have not a strong heart, have you?" asked Adelaide more gently.

"No," she replied, grasping at the straw. "Sudden—I can't stand anything like an accident—blood, death, screams and things!"

"But there wasn't anything."
"I know, but—there might have

been!"

The long eyes looked at her softly. "Well, here we are!" as the vehicle drew up at the stage door. "I shall give you a drop of cognac; that will set you up."

"Thanks, no. If you don't mind, I shall await you here. I shall be

calm in a few moments."

"Here in the carriage?"

"Yes, please; it will be better. This—I'm ashamed of myself!"

"Oh, nonsense! There was a time when I was the same. If I heard of a cat being run over I would go to bed and have my legs twitching so I'd have to have them rubbed. . . . I may be half an hour."

"Very well; the longer the better."
Adelaide descended with an amused laugh. "Merci bien! vous êtes gen-

tille!"

"Oh, I mean—it will give me time to control myself. This is such folly." "I understand. You will not be bored?"

"Not in the least."

When she moved away, singing lightly, Eva sank into the corner of the seat. She was conscious then of the stony coldness of her entire body, of a weight on her mind and heart that made it impossible to think. He was coming; he would be with this woman! He would enter that little apartment familiarly and lovingly! That was as far as she could get. No other thought took shape, although one strong desire possessed her-to get away; to be alone; to be free of the singer's atmosphere. She dreaded her return, and yet how escape it without rousing suspicion?

As the moments passed she grew hot and cold with terror of her coming; she sat huddled there, hating her surroundings, the little familiar handbag lying beside her; the handembroidered handkerchief; the carved ivory mirror; the tick of the handsome carriage clock. All seemed permeated with the singer's personality and to speak of hours passed with Winstanley, hours wherein she had never figured, as she sat at home pondering

and suffering.

More distinctly than it had appeared to her since their separation her husband's profile stood out, clear cut and colorless, against the other window. She felt him there beside her, waiting for and thinking of Adelaide; and swiftly there returned the impression of one ecstatic hour with him, when she had felt his being responding to the warmth in her; when, for a brief space, she had felt him hers, all in all, absorbed—alive in her!

The blood rushed to her brain; a frantic impulse seized her. Some action was necessary—something, she cared not what.

She started up; then, in fear of betraying herself to the other, took Adelaide's note-pad from the rack and wrote carefully: That fright has made me feel so ill, I have decided to go back. I was not feeling quite up to the mark today; I should only bore you in this condition, so shall doctor myself a little. I hope you will understand.

She laid the pad on the seat and left the carriage. There were several cabs at the corner; she beckoned to one and had herself driven to the Bois.

It was a relief to sit in that little compartment alone, with the whole world shut out. The slow movement on rubber tires soothed her. She sank into the corner and prepared herself to think out what she was to do-what had happened. But her excitement suddenly waned; she was aware only of a great satisfaction in being alone, a delicious gratitude toward conditions that made it possible thus to cut herself off from every-She found herself watching other vehicles passing, and, deciding that this distracted her from thinking, pulled down the blue blinds and sat in restful darkness. Even then she could not focus her mind upon the subject weighing at her heart. looked at the situation squarely; it was real and significant to her as a thing apart, but in relation to herself she could not grasp it.

That he was coming to Paris to be with Adelaide Fulton she realized, and looked upon the fact as she might have looked upon his dead face, feeling a mysterious distance between them; but try as she would she could get no farther.

After two hours of unprogressive brooding the cab came to a standstill.

She moved, and her bones ached from the cramp of one position; her hands lay heavy and cold in her lap.

On raising the blinds she saw it was already dark; the coachman was lighting his lamps. Several carriages passed by all alight. Above, the naked branches of trees showed they were still in the Park. As she sat wondering what she should do, the man came to the door and said: "Est-ce que c'est assez du Bois, madame?"

Put thus to the task, her thoughts

leaped. "Yes; take me to the Elysées Hôtel," she replied.

VI

Hamilton had passed a restless day. He had had a bad dream about Eva, and was possessed with the idea that she was ill or in trouble. He had remained indoors hoping for some word from her, and late in the afternoon had sent a note. The messenger returned to say that Eva was out. Twice again he had sent to her, always with the same result—she had not yet come in.

As it was dark when the last note was despatched, his foreboding increased. He thought of the fixed pain he had seen so often in her eves; the reckless false gaiety with which she had tried to rise above a sorrow she was too proud to express. It gave him a poignant pang to remember her courageous calm in discussing subjects he knew were shaking her inmost being; the hungry yearning with which she sought by argument to obtain solace for a bereavement more pitiless than death-for in death the one she loved would have been more hers. In his sympathy there was no room for jealousy; in fact, had he been able to dissect his feelings, he would have found that he loved her first for this very love that was dividing them. In it the real woman was divulged; through it he looked into her inmost nature, the nature a woman reveals only to her husband. His love tempted her confidence; and her love of the other, suffering and humiliated as it was, made her yield recklessly and deliberately to the temptation to let him serve her. He understood this; he saw that she was pitilessly using him, that what he might suffer through the intercourse meant nothing to her, and he realized that he was likely to suffer, that at any moment she might send him from her favor. The fact that she had made no attempt to conceal from him the true state of affairs only increased her influence upon him, an influence that was not so much a power as a controlling sympathy of being, an accordance that made him keenly alive to the nature he already understood more than Winstanley had done during

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their years of association.

With her husband this nature had been engulfed in her wish to please; it had never asserted itself. In her desire for his love she had studied to be what she thought might appeal to him, and, realizing that she did not hold his love, had deemed herself undeserving of it, and consequently struggled to be something that she was not, which is always a vital mistake; for the fool who can love a woman's disguise is not worthy of the effort, and a man or woman of real stability can give love only to a being equally stable and real.

Hamilton loved her without judgment, almost without passion. He loved the troubled, anxious woman, even the selfishness that made her so indifferent to his love. As he sat in his room, upon an uncomfortable upright chair, hugging one foot and pulling at the pipe that had scarcely been out of his mouth the whole day, he thought much about Winstanley. He did not hate him, being more puzzled than vindictive; and he could not understand how Winstanley could have married Eva, not realizing that in her he knew a woman entirely different from the one who had been his friend's wife. He had gradually come to look upon Winstanley as a man of degenerate character, controlled by unbalanced impulses, by-

A knock interrupted his meditation, and his heart leaped so fiercely with a thought of Eva that it carried the color

from his face.

The man handed him one of her cards on which was written:

I am waiting in a cab at the main doorway. I want you to come with me.

He was with her in less than five minutes.

"Is there some quiet place where we can dine?" she asked as he got in; "some unpretentious place, where the atmosphere is calm-no music."

He gave the order and pulled the door to. This sudden gratification of

the desire that had driven him almost frantic for several days left him no strength to speak. He felt her largely beside him; the very air seemed pervaded with her. He seemed to breathe her, to be absorbing her through every sense. He felt small, helpless and inarticulate. All the force of character he might have exercised with a woman he knew to be even a little in sympathy with him was perforce held in subjection. He was grateful for the crumbs, since he had been made to understand he might expect no more. Of late his desire for even the crumbs had become so intense that he was overcome by her mere presence.

They rolled down the lighted avenue in silence. Bells jingled on every side, vehicles passed to and fro, the cab creaked, and once, crossing the Avenue de l'Alma, it jolted on the tracks and her arm, touching his, thrilled him.

"Listen," she said quietly; "I don't want you to leave me this whole evening. I shall not go back to the pension until late. I feel as if I should go mad there, and—I don't want to be alone. You will not leave me?"

"No."

He longed to take her hand; to draw her to him as a brother might; to have her lay her white face upon his shoulder; to have her sob out the grief he knew was choking her, that left her no words, no courage even to weep. He was not curious to know the reason of the new despair; the knowledge that she was suffering, and that he dared not offer her the slightest word of comfort, absorbed all other consideration. He cursed his own stupidity, his clumsiness, the fact that he was not a woman. A woman would know how to soothe her, how to take the poison from her ache.

As the cab stopped Eva sat up. "What is this?" she asked, looking nervously through the window.

"The Café Ritz. We can have a private room." As he opened the door she caught his arm.

"I don't want to eat," she said quickly. "Take me to some place where we can be amused, some place where there are dancing, feats—trained animals."

He thought an instant before closing the door, then called to the driver to stop at the first news-stand.

"Est-ce que vous ne descendes pas ici?" demanded the man. "I can't go on all night. I want my dinner; my horse—"

"Do as I tell you," interrupted Hamilton, with the note of command that sends terror to the heart of Parisian

canaille, "and be quick."

On procuring a Figaro he examined the amusement column and decided upon the Casino as offering an entertainment the most likely to distract Eva.

"What is going on there?" she

asked.

"A sort of variety, 'L'Oncle d'Amérique'; rather amusing, some attractive songs."

"Sentimental?"

"No, witty. It is the best thing in Paris just now."

"Have you been there?"
"Yes; two nights ago."
"Did it make you laugh?"

"Yes."

"What do they do? Tell me all about it."

He began, and she interrupted him with the same nervous haste:

"Are there any dogs or birds, or anything?"

"Some monkeys that are really good."

"What do they do?"

"Oh, the usual trapeze work; and

"Monkeys are so human-looking—so hideous! Where are these trained lions one sees advertised everywhere?"

"Would you rather go there?"

"Yes, I hate humanity! I couldn't endure dancing and singing and—horseplay."

The new order was given.

"It is a very good show," he said, when they were en route in another direction. "The beasts are fine specimens, and it really is thrilling to see that slight, fragile-looking woman in the midst of them; when one—"

"Is she in the cage with them?"

"They are not in a cage; she brings them openly into the arena. Often they grow fretful and give her threatening looks. The other night—"

"If they attacked her they would be quickly shot, so there is not much

risk.

"To shoot twelve lions would take a little time; and when one is aroused——"

"What are those lights moving over

there?"

"The Moulin Rouge. Have you never seen it?"

"Not at night. Well, tell me about the—what was it?"

"The lions?"

"Yes."

"They are really fine crea-

"Why are they so tame?"

"They are drugged; but there is always the danger of the drug wearing off at unexpected moments—"

"Well, don't tell me that! I shall be expecting something awful to happen. I couldn't stand it tonight. Do you think it is likely anything will happen?"

"No. It has been going on now for four months without any acci-

dent."

"Yes, but tonight might be the very

exception."

"There is little danger; they run no risks. But would you rather change and do as we first intended?"

"No, I want to see them."

As she became silent Hamilton racked his brains for something to say that might interest her. He felt it would be folly to attempt any witticism; she was not in a mood for laughter, but craved distraction. He thought of a story he had heard the night before of how a man he knew had been blackmailed for a large sum on the ship coming over. He led up to it tactfully, and told it with a graphic smoothness that held her attention until they reached the animal show, and it gave him pleasure to feel that he had diverted her.

The animals also interested her; she

watched them with attention, her eyes following those that evinced the most life. She gave him the impression of being much younger than ever before, although she looked older. There were lines about her mouth and hollows in the cheeks; her eyes were sunken and dull with the dulness of suppressed pain; but despite this there was the inconsequence and self-oblivion of a child, that indefinable ignorance of responsibility, the heedless reliance on others that is a child's natural prerogative. It made him feel even more tenderly toward her, more anxious to indulge her every whim. He watched her, that he might be ready to comply with any change of mood, and, as he watched, his desire to give her more substantial comfort increased. was aware the instant she became weary and gently suggested leaving, to which she readily agreed.

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They drove back to the Café Ritz, where he engaged one of the private dining-rooms. He had had no dinner and had been under a strain the entire day, and he determined to smoke. He asked her if he might as he took out

his case.

"Yes, do smoke," she replied. With the sound of her voice and the sight of the wan face turned toward him he regretted his impatience, and condemned himself for thinking of his own appetites while she suffered. He rolled the cigarette for an unnecessary time, and when he saw her press her hand to her forehead laid it unlighted on the table.

"Have you a headache?" he asked,

a little later.

"Yes; distracting."

"If you would let me order you a little strong bouillon-"

She made a slight gesture. "No no; I couldn't swallow anything."

Her face, already haggard, was now marked with lines of physical pain that struck to his heart. As he looked at her and breathed the faintest fragrance of orris root, the only perfume she affected, there came over his mind a strange vacancy, a reckless, childish desire to fall at her feet, to cling to her, to bury his face in her soft skirt.

He sent for a bottle of eau de Cologne, and put a little of its contents on a handkerchief.

"This might do your head good, if— It is eau de Cologne; do you

object to it?"

She shook her head, and when he asked if he might bathe her forehead with it she nodded with eyes

closed.

He dampened the handkerchief twice again and pressed it gently upon her temples and brow. It gave him keen delight to do this, to be so near to her that he could hear her soft breath; to have that white, pained face under his hand, to be able to study the dear features, to note the lines that told so much of the story she would give him

no right to investigate.

After ten minutes she said softly: "That will do; thanks." And he, thrilled to the finger-tips with her magnetism, hesitated under an impulse to bend down and press his lips to her forehead. He conquered it, for she had already taught him a mighty selfcontrol that was as unfamiliar as unnatural to him. But although he went back to his seat without a word, the influence of that proximity was still strong upon him. He sat silently indulging it, looking upon her face, hearing her gently taken breath. Without any distinct thought, he lived that ten minutes over and over again.

"I want you to order something to eat; you must not go without some-

thing," she said at last.

"Oh, for myself, I don't need it; I had luncheon late. But you—is there

anything---?"

"I should tell you if I wanted something. Just now food would revolt me. Order something for yourself and put aside some bit for me; I might take it later. I want you to be with me a long time."

Although he knew how little compliment to himself was contained in this request, it gave him delight. He crossed to the bell and pressed it, although he was not hungry; the only physical desire he was conscious of was for another cigarette.

"Would you mind if I had a cigarette outside?" he asked presently.

"Why can't you smoke it here?"
"Because—your head."

"Oh, that is better; a cigarette never affects me."

He lighted one eagerly, and after a few puffs threw it into the fire. When the supper was brought he partook lightly of it and again gently importuned Eva, asking if she would not try to eat a little of the bird. But she

only shook her head.

As he watched her he wondered why it was she seemed nearer to him tonight, nearer and more his. The old problem returned. Why did he love her? Her looks, superficially, had not appealed to him; he had known many beautiful women among whom she could not be numbered; it was not her form which, although really beautiful, had made scarcely any impression upon him until this evening. And she had certainly not shown him her most appealing side; she had been cold and repelling. Why was it, then, that he loved her?

His thoughts strayed to Winstanley—her love for him that had survived so great a slight, that absorbed her to the exclusion of everything, that was so obviously devouring her youth. This love!—did he love her for that?

The idea was a shock, and he denied it at once, although it made him stare, although there was mingled in it a curious fascination. Had she never belonged so fully to another, had he met her as an inexperienced schoolgirl and won what Winstanley had possessed, the fresh, vernal love of her unawakened nature, would her power have been so great, could he have resigned himself to her as he did now? Though he repeated, "Yes, yes," under his breath, the world-created being within him answered, "No." He told himself bitterly that he hated to think of her having belonged to Winstanley. that it was the cruelest pang he had to bear; yet something stronger than his reason made him vividly picture their lives together, made him follow the development of her love, the awakening of her passion, the fresh, full flowering of a nature unweakened and unmarred by meaner ambitions or the drain of artificial emotions. There was in this pleasure something of the contradictory indulgence a hungry man, despairing of food, finds in watching another eat; but there was also the counterpassion of envy, which but adds a sharper edge to appetite, be it of the stomach or of the mind.

This thinking, though in a way intensifying his pleasure in having her near him, stirred him to nervous restlessness. He longed to pace the room, to walk away the thought of Winstanley. He smoked several cigarettes, fancying he was merely waiting for her strange mood to pass, but in reality buried deeply always in that married life wherein he had no

part.

Finally Eva leaned forward and toyed with the champagne glass in front of her.

"Do you feel better?" he asked.

She nodded, but he saw that there were deep lines under her eyes and she was very pale. There was a look of approaching age about the thin line of chin. He noticed these things swiftly, and their very unloveliness increased his compassion and tenderness; he longed to lay his hand caressingly on her hair.

"Let us go," she said suddenly. "Take me back to that stupid pen-

sion."

VII

The next morning she received a note from Hamilton and one from Adelaide Fulton. The latter expressed anxiety for Eva, and begged that she would send a line by the bearer.

Fearing the singer might take further steps to learn her condition, she hastily penned a few lines to say she had quickly recovered. Having despatched this, she made herself ready to automobile with Hamilton to Versailles, where they passed the day—an

unusually bright and mild one—traversing the splendid playgrounds of the country's most unhappy queen; the little and large Trianon; the intimate, memory-haunted apartments of witty Maintenon; and lunched and dined in that choicest of restaurants, the Reservoir, wherein still hover the aroma of profligate days forever dead, the echo of cultured voices, the rustle and fragrance of a society that can never be again.

Every day and evening during the following weeks they spent together making automobile excursions to interesting places in the environs, dining at Armenonville, at Saint Cloud, at Belle Vue. She avoided visiting any of the favorite haunts of Paris, lacking courage to go deliberately where she was likely to see Winstanley, yet not willing to leave the city for the very reason that he was there, that she was

near to him.

Her moods during these days were not to be depended upon; at times recklessly gay, at others taciturn, un-interested and even captious. With Hamilton she made not the slightest effort at self-control. Every whim was indulged, every change of temper given vent to with an independence that told him how little his opinion meant to her. Although this hurt him, he reflected that she had let him know from the beginning what he had to expect, and there was a certain charm in being constantly in touch with the real woman, a charm he had never known in connection with any other. Sometimes her changes were so swift and unexpected, from moodiness to gaiety, from cold silence to a half-teasing interest, that he was disposed to lose the self-control he knew it was necessary to maintain. But once only did his feelings really overcome him.

One evening after dining at the Palace Hotel they had returned to her little salon in the pension, and she sang to him. Her first choice was "La Vie," by Nevin, and after that a romance from "Mignon." He trembled as her full, vibrating voice

poured the words forth with thrilling pathos:

"Hélas! que ne puis-je te suivre Vers ce pays lointain d'où le sort m'exila C'est là, c'est là que je voudrais vivre, Aimer, aimer et mourir. C'est là que je voudrais vivre, C'est là, oui, c'est là."

When the last note throbbed into his pulses he went to her swiftly, and, laying his hands on her shoulders, pressed his lips to the top of her head in a long, tender and reverent caress, whereby some of the pent passion

within him sought relief.

At first Eva made no movement. Her hands fell upon the keys. Then she wheeled about to face him, a quick reproof upon her lips; but when she saw in his pale face all that he had mastered she arose, saying merely: "Don't, don't be foolish. Come, put a log on the fire, and let us talk a little before you go; it is already late."

All this was to Hamilton a delicious purgatory, a purgatory he would not struggle to escape, although he knew it led to an eternal hell. He had been fascinated by women through their deliberate and artificial playing upon his egotism; now he was absorbed in the undisguised nature of a woman, with all its mysterious changes and impulses and bewildering comparisons. It was a thing to cherish, to adore; yes, and to fear, for it might turn to destroy him beyond all redemption, beyond hope, should he be guilty of a This fear made him humble; created in him a submissiveness, a patience not native; made him oblivious of his own suffering, in his anxiety for her pleasure. His love also rendered him so keenly alive to her suffering that he labored more to assuage it than to win sympathy for himself.

Eva was blind to much that might have won her admiration under other conditions, for pain when it touches to the quick arouses an all-absorbing egotism. Women known to her had suffered calamities which in the telling might carry more horror to the auditor's ear, but, of all the miseries that fall to the human heart, to bear the pain of a rejected love that has grown to its maturity in the belief of full return is the most intolerable. There is not the sharp, inexorable shock of death, that in its mystery stuns the mind to partial paralysis, nor the sweet recompense of spiritual communion that death affords; there is not the comfort of expending grief in tending and soothing the shattered frame of a loved one maimed in an accident or of helping him to bear his burden in the hour of disgrace. In Eva's suffering there was no compensation, nothing to do and nothing to say. There could be no confidence in others, no complaints to him to whom her love meant nothing; she had come to the horizon line of her life, and the line was a high, pitiless, impenetrable wall. The cruelest anomaly of this condition is that the wounded love does not die; on the contrary, it lives more keenly, more sentiently, like a deadly canker closed in the heart.

Hamilton's experience with women of nearly every class during his struggling years in the West, his halcyon days in the most advanced society of London and New York, while it had not before stirred the chord of affinity between his soul and another, had educated him to a clear and real cognizance of certain finer qualities in the feminine nature. He won her gradually to put trust in him, to look to him for diversion. Sometimes during these uneasy weeks she allowed him to take her to the Elysées Hôtel to dine, as it was near her pension and removed from the gayer quarters of the city. The people and music interested her, and an occasional sight of the world she had cut herself off from acted as a reviving stimulant and roused her to something of her old joyousness.

One evening she was in a particularly gay mood. A touch of color had come to her face, now so habitually pale, and a brighter gleam to her eyes.

They had a small table in a corner of the main salle à manger, and Hamilton had given private orders to the musicians, enforced by a liberal fee, to

play her favorite pieces. It was one of the few occasions when he dared to feel happy through seeing her comparatively so. As usual when in this mood, her gaiety was almost extravagant, her repartee daringly brilliant and her attitude toward him spiced with bewildering gleams of a magnetic consciousness of his love, the more affecting because so unexpected. In discussing the people about them she kept him laughing with droll comparisons and pointed criticisms.

Finally, smiling, she looked at him

and said:

"See my glass. You have filled yours three times to my one!"

"Because you refused it."

"And if I did? Am I never to have food if I happen not to be hungry the first time it is offered?"

"It's always well to take a thing when one can; we never can be sure

of its returning."

"What a brute you will be when these flinty principles mature with old age."

"What a tyrant to my wife, eh?"
"If you ever— Look! see who

are coming!"

Hamilton turned to behold a party of New Yorkers, well known to them both, enter the room and move toward

the farther end.

"Ah, the nobility of Mammon's Court! Harry Oldenheim—probably all his party. I saw his yacht was at Cannes last week—a jolly fine craft. It's been my envy for years. You people in the States do do things well when you attempt an outlay. There are no private yachts anywhere to—"

"Let us get out before they are seated. I don't want to be seen."

The butler was in the act of serving them with iced creams from the centre of a great block of clear ice, surmounted by a pyramid of candied sugar that glowed with soft color from secreted lights. Hamilton hastily put down his napkin. "Good; we shall have our coffee in the foyer."

They installed themselves in a corner near a group of palms, and were served coffee à la Turk by a veritable Turk in costume.

"I shouldn't drink this," said Eva when she had enjoyed the concentrated beverage from two of the six tiny cups set before her.

"Why shouldn't you?"

"It makes my heart palpitate; but I do love it so!" *

"Show your force of character, and

limit yourself to three."

"I have no force of character besides—oh, say something amusing! I

am getting desperately blue!"

"You should be more chameleonic and take the color of your surroundings. There is certainly nothing blue here! Look at that sweet bud of thirty-eight over there. She is laughing from her toes up. I'll wager she hasn't looked in a mirror for a month or she wouldn't have the courage to laugh. What a waste of dry-goods all that clothing is and what a lot it takes to cover her, eh?"

Glancing at Eva he discovered she was not listening, but staring at one point in troubled pensiveness. He watched her, wondering how he might divert her thoughts, when she startled him by jerking herself back and exclaiming: "Don't look at me!"

He controlled his swift rush of annoyance in compassion for her mood, which he thought he understood. "Do

you want to go from here?"

" No."

He smoked viciously for a moment as a vent to growing temper. Had he better remonstrate or continue to be humble and patient? It was ignominious, unmanly even; yet—she was suffering. The sight of these people had doubtless brought up all the old life; she realized all that was lost, all—

Her hand was laid on his arm. "I am a selfish wretch," she said in an unusually gentle tone; "but—you know what I am! Why do you—? The sight of those people maddens me. I had begun to forget that world."

Hamilton's eyes grew warm; he

laid his hand on hers.

"Shall we go somewhere—to the opera?"

Eva withdrew her hand. "What are they having?"

"I'll see." He called to a boy, and bade him learn what was to be given that evening.

"I want to get away before they come out," said Eva. "What a

chance it was they—"
A voice saying, "I shall be in the writing-room," checked the words. Hamilton also heard it and saw that she turned white to the lips. Simultaneously they glanced whence it came and beheld Winstanley striding diagonally across the foyer, a tall, sinewy man, pale, clean-shaven, beautiful of feature, bald at the temples and dressed with the perfect taste of innate refinement. Even with the first sight of him one was impressed by a certain exquisiteness of temperament, an intense susceptibility to the finer underqualities of life. Back of the delicate. almost classical face one felt the soul of an Emerson, the fine perceptions of a Keats and perhaps even the morbid vision of Edgar Poe. Yet withal there was manliness, though this element was to be recognized only as an indelible trait, like the cheekbones and nostrils of a civilized and modernly dressed American Indian.

As he was moving from them they watched him unseen until he passed

through an opposite doorway.

Eva arose and Hamilton followed her. "Shall we go?" he asked, pained by the sight of her blanched face and agitation. Her eyes burned and were alive with swift thought.

"No; await me here. I want-I

shall— Wait here."

He stepped in her way. "What are you going to do?"

The tone held her, and as their eyes

met her face hardened.

"What do you mean?" she demanded, in a challenging undertone.

"I mean that-you are not going to

"I shall do as I choose. Don't you

Hamilton went as white as she. "That you shall not do; no, not if I must use force!"

He saw her pupils grow large; her lips became drawn and paler. He felt her gaze like a blade buried and twisted in him, but back of the pain of this was a determination, venturesome, inflexible, in which all his passionate nature was for the moment centered

"You are most insolent!" she said. "What is it to you what I do?"

"You shall not do that!"

"I shall! Don't attempt to stop

As she moved to push by him Ham-

ilton caught her arm.

"You are mad!" he said hoarsely. "You don't know what you are doing. Think of the humiliation,

"Let me go! You- How dare

As she wrenched her arm he felt its living warmth under his fingers, and

"If you go, I go, too," he said, and walked swiftly beside her. At this she turned sharply as though to strike him, her hands clenched.

"I want you to leave me!" she said. "Do you hear? I want you to leave

me now, this moment!"

"I go if you go," he returned doggedly. "Before God, whatever happens, you shall not go to that man

The groups sitting near ceased conversing and stared with the eagerness for excitement ever under the skin of the French. But of them Eva and Hamilton were oblivious; they were absorbed in their own concentrated mental forces, alive in every smallest

fibre to each other. The boy Hamilton had despatched at that moment approached with the desired information, but before he had half pronounced it Eva turned off in the opposite direction. Hamilton followed her. He was vividly conscious of the swift jerking of her train, the glow of red in her hair, the almost visible fury that seemed to envelop her like an electric vapor. For himself he was more excited than angry. He had seen his duty clearly, and had the hotel's entire population risen to defy him he would have opposed them to the death to have gained his point. That he had gained it he now recognized, but with the relief came a dull dread of the consequence.

It came quickly and more pitilessly

than he had expected.

At the door of the cloak-room she turned on him, her face contorted with rage.

"This is the end!" she said. "Never speak to me, let me never see your

race—

"Don't say things you may regret later. I may have been rough; I——" She interrupted, speaking so swiftly

as to be scarcely intelligible:

"Offer me no apologies! You have insulted me as you would not dare to do had I—anyone to protect me! You have shown yourself to be underbred—despicable! I forbid you to accompany me even to the door or ever to recognize me again."

She hurled the last words with unspeakable scorn. Like a blow in the face, they sent the blood in an angry rush to his head. He was stung by the humiliation of this attempt to punish him, the deliberate effort to wound, and, briefly tempted to strike back, he caught her by the wrist.

"Listen; you shall listen to this," he began; but her pitiable pallor, the half-frightened flash of her eyes, checked his vengeful impulse. He finished more generously, though still with anger: "There will come a day when you will thank me for my service to you tonight, but what you have said in this moment I accept. You shall never see me again, though what I have done I do not regret and never shall regret."

She strained from him, and, as he freed her, paused, her lips stirring to form words she could not articulate. Then she turned into the room.

VIII

THAT night was sleepless for them both. Hamilton, in his little room,

stood in the dark by the window looking out upon the Champs Elysées. watching the ceaseless procession of carriages creeping, like phosphoruseyed beetles, from the heart of the city. He felt that his parting with Eva was indeed final. There was nothing to be done on his side. She would be merciless, for his love meant nothing to her: it might even be a satisfaction to her to know he suffered through it! In his cooler mood he tried to blame himself, but could not. What he had done he felt to be right; had he permitted her to go she would have more justly blamed him later. What mad idea had actuated her?

The vivid picture of what her humiliation would have been had she actually carried out her impulse brought the color to his face; he even blamed her and said "Fool!" under his breath. Then the thought of her love came, the love that had enfeebled her strong nature. It started the old ache again, intensified now by the knowledge of his own banishment, that he might not longer even bask in the reflection of that love. Of this pain he was ashamed, but it was only the more unbearable because of the shame. He tried to strengthen himself by seeking for weakness and selfishness in her, by recalling every cruel word she had uttered, every action that revealed unfeeling indifference to his distress.

But through the confusion of these memories he saw only her suffering face, he could appreciate only the great sorrow that had, in spite of herself, hardened her to all the rest of the world, and it made him feel more hopelessly removed from her. Their sorrow was now akin, with the difference that his love of her made it possible for him to recognize their similitude, while she was blind to everything but her own love that formed an impassable barrier between them.

What could she have hoped to gain by humiliating herself to Winstanley? Had she thought to ignite the flame that was dead, that perhaps never existed?

The idea of her spirit humbled to such

a point for the man who had never appreciated her was hard to bear, but harder still was the knowledge that in trying to save her he had only won her hatred—for there had been hatred, real, undisguisable, in her eyes in that last look.

This was intolerable! He had deemed himself courageous, reckless of the consequence of his unpropitious association with her; but to be parted like this, knowing that she hated him, that she would probably never understand his interference save as jealous selfishness!

His thoughts worked to a sort of delirious frenzy. He determined to leave Paris; to return to his own estates and look after things there; to go on a tour about the world for a year, and let everything else go to the devil. New scenes, new people would erase her from his memory as though she had never been.

At the same time he was thinking of her lonely position, the unwhole-some misery of her life. It might lead to anything! Without even him to divert her she would yield more to the morbid depressions of her mood, and might resort to any means to escape them.

Confinement in the room became unendurable, and, late as it was, he went out into the night and sought one of the many places of diversion in everalive Paris.

Eva, denied this blessed privilege, sat huddled in a deep chair by her grate, and yielded herself to the devouring flames of anger and yearning. She felt no regret for the impulse that had prompted her to go to Winstanley, only rage that it had been frustrated. She was confident still that, had he seen her then, glowing with all the warmth of her nature stirred to a mature awakening, he would have recognized in her something he had never before suspected; he would have seen the child he had left developed to an intense woman; she would have stood out vividly, alluringly, in comparison with Adelaide Fulton. In spite of himself he must have been interested,

for a love like hers, when matured as now, could not be ignored. She knew his nature. She understood now what he had formerly missed in her. In that moment he would have recognized it, for her nature had been keyed to the point, and she had felt her power. And he, Hamilton, had dared to interfere! By what right? Upon what grounds? She struck the arm of her chair. This was the reward of tolerating his association! Never again should he come into her life! He had treated her like a child.

If she could but have the chance again? . . . Why not look up his address and send—? No, a letter would fail! She must come upon him by chance, as then.

If he could but hear her sing! Hamilton might have arranged that—but he never would. She wanted nothing more to do with Hamilton. His very love had ever seemed like a menace to her own; he was jealous, selfish, impertinent

It was as though Fate had brought her into the foyer just in time to see him enter. There was something intended by that, surely! How beautiful he was! How different from other men!

Until the day dawned she sat brooding thus, concocting plans only to dismiss them, and finally trusting to Fate that they might be brought together again, confident that her love would triumph.

After a short sleep in the morning she awoke with an idea—she would go to see Adelaide Fulton. From her she could learn something of his doings; it was a bitter thought, to learn from her, this woman, of her husband's—But he was not her husband! No; he was the being she loved, that was all.

. . . There was danger in going to the singer's; what if—? Miss Wallace could help her; she would learn something from her.

For the first time in three weeks she entered the *pension* dining-room, and amid the hubbub of antagonistic voices played with the food that was set before her. Miss Wallace came in

late, and Eva was obliged to await her in the drawing-room, making coffee the excuse, as she dreaded rousing her suspicions by evincing a too obvious interest. In her unnerved condition it was agony to sit under the eyes of these envious and ill-bred women; to feel that they were dissecting her with the pitiless criticism to which their class always subjects one whom they know, without acknowledging, as their superior. The Californian was there, more highly rouged than ever, and Eva, who could not bring herself even to nod to

her, felt her presence acutely.

She was sitting close to a large Swedish-American, a modern Amazon, a general among her class, every movement of whose large-boned frame was a boast that she was afraid of nothing and no one, that she was as good as any and meant everyone should know it. To this individual Eva could see in a mirror the Californian whisper concerning herself; she could see the scornful superiority on the Amazon's enormous face; she saw her bring her hand heavily down on the Californian's knee, say something in an undertone and rise. The next moment she had drawn a chair close to Eva's.

"You're quite a stranger these days!" she said in a deep bass and with an attempt at geniality that was like a horse trying to be ladylike. "We don't see you any more than if you didn't live here! 'Spect you go out a

lot, don't you?"

Eva tried to control her annoyance.

"Yes, a great deal," she said.

The woman's yellow eyes traveled over her, noted the texture of her gown, her hair, the pin at her throat, her rings, the wan and tired face.

"It's nice to have someone take a body about. Ain't you afraid of those automobile things? My! I wouldn't go in one of 'em for a min't! Don't it make you shudder when you remember all the accidents and things?"

"I don't remember them."

"Don't you? Oh, well, I guess it all depends on the way you're made. Some people never worry. It's the best way. Now, I fret like a kitten!

You wouldn't think it to look at me,

would you? Ha! ha!"

Her heavy hand came down familiarly on Eva's arm as she swayed backward laughing. "My Lord! I'm as timid as a little mouse, and people think I hadn't ought to be afraid of anything. But I guess when you're enjoying things the fright goes, don't it?"

Eva swallowed her coffee quickly; her nerves seemed knotted; the atmosphere became oppressive.

"Do you go a long ways in that thing?" pursued the Swedish-Ameri-

can.

Eva arose. "Oh, not very far," she replied, and, inclining her head a little, added, "Good night," with a steady look that forbade any further detention.

She hurried to her room, loathing them, and determined to leave the house. A sickening repugnance for the entire situation was upon her, a deadly loneliness. She could see no way out of it, no succor, no friend. Hamilton—that was impossible. She could not tolerate him! And yet he had made life bearable. With door locked she paced the room wondering what she should do, where she should go, how endure the days to come.

When someone knocked she pictured the Swedish-American coming with some prying question, and demanded coldly who was there.

"A note, madame."

The thought flashed through her mind, could Winstanley have seen her and, under some swift impulse, have written to her——?

She took the note and relocked the door. It was from the Elysées Hôtel, but the writing was unfamiliar.

Within was a rapidly penned invitation from Mrs. Oldenheim to dine at the Elysées the next evening and to join her party the following Wednesday for a cruise in Southern waters on her husband's yacht. Regret was expressed that Eva had been out the afternoon before when Mrs. Oldenheim called to ask her in person,

For some moments she sat with the

note in her lap. Should she do it? There would be diversion, novelty, even amusement, for she loved the sea. It would be a wise move; her salvation, perhaps! Any rational being would leap at it! In such a courageous decision lay the kernel of true philosophy. Only thus could she hope to undo the wrong done her!

And all the while she was sure she would not go; that nothing would tempt her to; that she hated the note and its writer; that she was furious to know they had discovered her where-

abouts.

Finally she wrote that she would be unable to accept, as she was leaving Paris at once. When this was despatched she called the maid to assist her, packed rapidly and had herself and her belongings taken to a small hotel on the Avenue d'Iéna.

Hamilton, who with every hour felt the separation growing wider between them, gave his valet money for generous bribes, and directed him to learn at any price whether Eva were preparing to leave the city. Thus he was immediately made aware of her change of domicile, and, although it took her a block farther from him, he was glad to know she was out of the uncon-

genial pension atmosphere.

To Eva the change was gratifying. Though she was really more removed from people, she felt less lonely. For two days she resigned herself with relief to thought, always going over the same ground, always regretting the opportunity lost, always trying to plan some means of obtaining another chance to see and speak with Winstanley. The more she thought of it the more faith she developed in her own power. The metamorphosis that had taken place within her she understood as the awakening of her true nature; anything and everything seemed possible to her.

Of Hamilton she thought not at all; and he scarcely drew a breath without thinking of her. He never left the hotel, save late in the evening, hoping that she might relent from sheer loneliness and send for him. He wished to

be on the spot should a note come, and provided himself with a stock of reading matter to while away the hours

of waiting.

Three days later he ventured to take coffee after dinner in the foyer, where he had not appeared until sure the Oldenheim party had departed. It diverted him to smoke in a corner and watch the people, for he was tired of thinking and reading, tired of trying to ignore the one persistent thought.

He had begun to take a vague interest in some people who were laughing and chatting near him, when he saw Winstanley enter with a little, bearded Frenchman. They recognized each other simultaneously, and Winstanley, with a parting word to his

companion, crossed over.

"You here?" he said in his nervous undertone. "I thought I saw you in the street yesterday. How are you?" As they clasped hands he straddled a chair opposite and leaned on the little table. "Been here long?"

"A few days."

Winstanley looked at him through half-closed blue eyes and ran his fingers up through the loose hair on his brow. "You look out of sorts," he said. "Anything wrong?"

"I'm bored. That always pulls a

fellow down. A cigarette?"

Winstanley took one, and looked casually about him, noting everything. "Nothing to amuse you?" he queried uninterestedly, then lighted and puffed swiftly several times. "Did you see Oldenheim? He was here."

"I saw him at a distance."

"He would have taken you about the Mediterranean. Had rather an

attractive party."

Hamilton said nothing; a curious coldness had come over him. He felt drawn within himself like a turtle that has come in contact with an antagonistic element. Yet there was a certain fascination in having Winstanley there, an interest in studying so closely his familiar features—the features so familiar to Eva. The man appeared to him essentially different from what he had understood him to be in the days

of their close association. Every nervous movement impressed him vividly; the uncommon introspective expression of eye, the beautiful, sensitive lips, the white forehead creased slightly between straight brows, conveyed an impression of almost effeminate delicacy that Hamilton had never before thought of attributing to him.

During the pause Winstanley signed to a servant and ordered a siphon and whisky; then, taking from his pocket an exquisitely carved meerschaum mouthpiece, fitted his cigarette into it and smoked, listening to the music with interested unconcern, as though he were quite alone. Suddenly he said softly: "Ah, they are off there! A half-note flat!"

When the whisky was brought he helped himself abstractedly, and sat back. "My opera is finished," he said. "Adelaide is now studying it."

'Indeed?"

For the first time Winstanley regarded his vis-à-vis deliberately, and there came a sharp gleam into his eyes. "You don't appear very interested," he said.

"I sincerely hope it will be a suc-

cess."

"Perhaps you do, but I don't believe it; mais ça m'est égal! What's troubling you? Something-out with If a man has anything against me I should like to know it—that is only fair."

Hamilton felt his temper rising, though he could not have explained

exactly why.

"What could I have against you?" he demanded, with a touch of passion. Certainly you have not wronged me."

"You mean that I have wronged

someone?"

"It would scarcely be my place to remind you of that."

"I agree with you there," returned Winstanley, and leaned over to examine the mosaic work of the table. He examined it several moments, his white, strongly molded hand against the table's edge. When he sat erect again he puffed a long whiff of smoke into "You see we look at life from the air.

different points of view," he said "I can't appreciate thoughtfully. conventional obligations. Nature is the only controlling power I recognize. What's the value of a thing that is made obligatory by conventional law? We are born with natural drifts of temperament; if we make a mistake we should do what we can to undo it. not to live up to it! If a fellow steps into a bog, is it right to wade on through it until it's up to his throat and he drowns?"

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"If he has dragged someone else in,

yes."

Winstanley looked meditative. "That sort of argument is narrowminded sophistry. People adopt it because they think they ought to."

"I've never been considered narrowminded, but I certainly do believe that a man who assumes a responsibility, however rashly, should stand by it at

all hazards."

"He should wade on through the bog, eh, until they're both drowned? Well, I don't agree with you. How is he to save the other unless he gets himself out?"

Hamilton, realizing toward what they were drifting, was shocked to silence in remembering the absent one whom he had thus crudely recalled to this man's mind to compassionate. Compassionate! The thought angered him.

"It is fortunate that there are some, even among those thought too weak, who need no helping hand in the more serious catastrophes of life. Gad! they're the ones to admire! . . . How's that whisky?"

Winstanley's blue eyes traveled slowly over the other's face. "Not bad," he replied, and drank long from his glass. Hamilton ordered another

pony.
"You say your opera is to be pro-

duced at once?"

"Oh, no; Adelaide is studying it; she likes it. When it will be produced no man can say." He looked about him absent-mindedly from object to object, his fingers beating the table noiselessly.

Hamilton, watching him, tried to determine what it was that made him unlike other men. He knew him to be an able athlete, a good enough fellow with men; yet there was something indescribable, an ultra-refinement, sensibilities that gave him an air of being sufficient to himself in a sense entirely

distinct from egotism.

"Your opinion has not the value of a sou to me," said Winstanley thought-"I wish it had. No one's opinion means anything to me. I'm absorbed in Adelaide Fulton; but do you think I am ever striving for her good opinion? It's a matter of indifference what she thinks, so long as we don't jar each other. We never do jar, because naturally we are adapted. We are united by natural selection; what should I care for the rest? I have in me no bitterness, Hamilton; I don't hold myself above society, but I see its mistakes. What was—my wife's love for me? The fancy of an undeveloped nature. There was no natural sympathy between us, for that can't exist one-sided. She believed-"

"Let's leave her out of the argument; after all, she isn't here."

Winstanley looked steadily at him. "You need not attempt to correct me," he said; "I don't stand for that. If we are to talk as friends, well and good; but if we are to be on conventional lines I shall meet you there as you meet me, and we can waste an hour, or—part."

"I don't feel in touch with you, I'll allow," returned Hamilton. "Your philosophy appears to me merely a

misunderstood egotism."

"Why misunderstood? I do not attempt to disguise it. I have as much contempt for the man who flatters himself that he is not selfish as I have for a woman who will acknowledge no point of vanity. What man—what human being is not selfish? Every word we utter, every act we commit, every emotion we suffer is fundamentally selfish. The love we give someone is selfish; the sacrifice we make for that being is selfish. Even in the case of stronger ones, who make a sacrifice for people they hate, the motive is a

desire for self-development, a longing for the inner gratification that comes from an educationally acquired idea that denial improves the soul. Pooh!

. I have no opinion of men who think to make themselves perfect by merely obeying the letter of social—doctrines, for there is no other word to express it! When I found I could not honestly be the husband of the woman I married I made no pretenses; I allowed her to break it there!"

Hamilton blew smoke above him and watched it spread out thinly. "Wouldn't it have been more just to have decided that before marrying?"

he asked.

"Yes; as it would be more just to ask a fellow before he is born what he would prefer to be. Who is just, or where is there justice in anything? Look at me and at other men of wealth! When have we done a hand's turn to help humanity? The whole principle of life is rotten. Who is to know what's right?"

"Do you ever think your view might

be abnormal?"

"Perhaps it is, but there is nothing to prove it. Society has so perverted right and wrong I'm blamed if I can see where the line is drawn."

"Oh, rot! We men must shoulder the responsibility of social decadence."

"You have spent your years in the free, open life of the West. You can't judge."

"I've had my share of social life."

The other took a fresh cigarette. "When I married," he said, "it was too late; I could not appreciate the wife I won. My taste was vitiated; I hated it all. It's hard to have one's world become unendurable at thirty-six. If I had been a poor man I could be happy in ideals and lose myself in laboring for a new atmosphere."

"And, as it is, you can buy it!"
"No; once reared in that air all other is insipid; there is nothing to strive for, nothing. One becomes so familiar with the rank filmsiness of humanity that even the world's applause holds no value."

"Why understand the narrow limits

of smart society as embracing humanity? Society is but a small garden of exotic and cultivated plants, fenced off from the fresh prairies of real life."

"Yes, but one is lonely in the prairies, where there is none of the stimulating

fragrance of the garden."

"I can't see your point. If you crave that atmosphere, why despise it?"

"It's the hypocrisy I loathe, not the laxity. Once law has become contemptible, one can never again take it seriously, and what galls me is that most of us pretend to. Nature is all that is left; but it must be nature of the tropics, life spiced with experience and intelligence, open, real, spontaneous! I'd rather have been born a coal-heaver than have lived the life I've led since sixteen! I haven't drawn a morally healthful breath. Look at me! I'm in fit enough condition physically, but my nature is soaked in the alcohol of extravagance. I have done nothing criminal, but I've absorbed into my soul the debasing elements of a life that is poisonously artificial; I've drunk of it until my nature sickened and craved change. My appreciation of simple, healthful existence is destroyed, as a drunkard's stomach is destroyed for wholesome food. My one surviving interest is a desire for sensation, and this I must have."

"Why the deuce did you let your-

Winstanley's attention was caught by something at the end of the foyer. "Gad!" he exclaimed; "here come Olga Whitney and her party. I must be off!"

As he arose Hamilton looked up and saw the lovely Mrs. Furgerson Whitney, one of New York's leading younger matrons, coming toward them. She wore a handsome dinner gown and was accompanied by another young woman whose husband, like hers, had been left behind to accumulate dollars while she enjoyed her annual vacation in Paris. A typical specimen of globetrotting clubman, always to be found haunting foreign capitals, walked attentively at their side.

As they approached, Mrs. Whitney

caught Winstanley's eye. She went to him swiftly.

"What chance! You here. I am so glad! Now you must both come with us to the Casino. 'La Voluptata' is there, the serpent of Eden! You can't resist!"

She laughed gaily, and glanced mis-

chievously at the clubman.

"Sorry," said Winstanley quietly; "I never go to that sort of thing,

"Oh, well, break your rule. What folly! Why are you here, if not to see things? We shall have one of the oldtime suppers at Maxim's. Don't tell me you've become Philistine. You will come, won't you?" turning to Hamilton.

"I should like it immensely, had I not already promised myself for this

evening."

"Oh, nonsense! Come along, do! Make a partie carrée. We're odd, you see, and you are just the man we want."

"I wish I could avail myself-it's un-

fortunate. This evening I'm tied up."
"Well, I must be off!" remarked Winstanley, bowing rather stiffly to the women, and, murmuring au revoir to Hamilton, he withdrew.

"Gracious! how funnily propriety sits upon Bobby!" said Mrs. Whitney, whereupon she and her friend laughed with the effervescence of lately par-

taken champagne.

"His manners have not improved with his morals," remarked the latter. The clubman smiled, and, smoothing his clean-shaven chin, looked languidly about the foyer. Mrs. Whitney made a few more alluring appeals, which were met by Hamilton with the same politely obstinate regret; then she turned away, saying over her shoulder, "If you change your mind, join us at Maxim's at twelve. The room to the right, upstairs."

IX

THE next day Eva felt her loneliness so deeply as almost to long for the people of the pension. For the first time since their parting she thought with regret of Hamilton. He had been good to her; he was interesting; life was certainly intolerable without someone. If only he did not love her she could send for him, but, as it was, such encouragement would only make their relations insufferable.

Yet what was there ahead of her? This sort of thing could not go on. The thought of seven more days spent as she had spent the past few months was appalling. Her room-she could afford only one here-oppressed her. Every article of furniture had already become familiar with that stolid monotony that seems to be conveyed to inanimate things by an atmosphere devoid of change and sensation.

With no definite object in view she dressed and went out. The sun, as a rare indulgence, flooded the day with his genial radiance. There was a sweet hint of spring in the air, and men were to be seen pushing little carts filled with early flowers. A steady stream of rubber-tired vehicles, smart carts, cabs, automobiles sped gaily toward the Bois, bells ringing, hoofs beating, horns tooting, machines puffing in a glad hubbub of pleasure-seeking activity.

Eva walked aimlessly, feeling the beauty of the day touching her ache to fuller life, feeling how far removed she was from the joy of it all, when she came upon a group of brightly ribboned bonnes attending fairy-like children.

The scene awoke an emotion that rang through her heart as one's voice, calling, rings through chambers forever bereft of the being loved. She remembered her little son-the bond that might have held Winstanleythe living combination of their separate beings!

Like the quivering flashes in a cinematograph, all that was lost to her passed before her in rapid succession. She felt herself an outcast of life, love

and happiness.

She must have someone at once to talk to; someone who-

She saw a bureau de poste opposite,

and crossed to it. She would telegraph Hamilton. In twenty minutes he would come in his car and take her at a wild pace to-Versailles, any place. He would be sure to be there waiting, and he would forgive, for he loved her. Loved her!

She paused at the door. If only he did not! She could not endure that: it might mean explanations—perhaps tenderness on his part! She turned in the opposite direction, walking

slowly.

Hamilton, in a cab, saw her as she crossed the avenue and turned down the rue Boëtié. He saw the loneliness in her face, and his heart smote him. He longed to get out and go to her; no humiliation seemed too great could he but serve her or offer her some com-The direction she took prevented his obeying the impulse, for he knew Adelaide Fulton lived there, and was aware that should she be going to her she would not welcome

He stopped the cab at the corner and watched until she passed under the doorway he dreaded to see her enter; then sat for awhile burning with anger before he ordered the man to

take him back to the hotel.

Adelaide, in a pale green peignoir, was at her desk writing, when Eva entered the bedroom whither she had been summoned by a call.

"Bien, ma chérie! I thought you were buried or married," she said,

without looking up.

Eva sat down and looked about her, wondering why she had come. There was a typewritten manuscript lying on the sofa. She took it up and read where it was open.

There were music and words; a love scene, alive with unusual passion and pathos. It held her attention. She

read on with interest.

Adelaide leaned over and pressed an

electric bell.

"You are not loquacious," she murmured, rising and carefully folding the paper on which she had written a long telegram.

"What is this?" asked Eva.

"My new opera, 'Après la Vie.' Good, but too advanced for— Nom d'un chien! Why doesn't that woman come?" She pressed the bell long and savagely. "However, the author has sufficient means to produce it himself; and once well produced it might penetrate their dull pates; who can tell? Certainly the idea is beautiful, and the music— Oh, that woman!"

She sprang to the door and, flinging it open, shrieked, "Margarete! Margarete! Where in the devil's name are you? Sapristi! I have been ringing here for a century! Do you think me an electric battery? Come at once

and take this telegram!"

As the maid came bustling up the corridor, tying on an apron, she continued, "This should have gone an hour ago! What do you think I write telegrams for, to keep them to cool while the post goes? Parbleu! And you languidly wash the milk pail or pare potatoes!"

"I did not hear madame."

"Tomorrow the wires shall be attached to your ears and legs! You shall be shocked until every hair on your head curls to a crisp. Fly with this."

Margarete, trying to suppress laughter, seized the paper and flew.

A key turned in the outside door; someone entered and closed it.

Adelaide sank into a chair opposite Eva, looking at her critically. The latter was still absorbed in the manuscript.

"Tell me," said the singer gently, "are you wanting something to do?"

Eva looked up. "What do you

"Would you like to get an engagement?"

"No; you know I am not going in for singing professionally."

"But—what's worrying you?"

"Worrying me? Why do you-?"
A tremor crossed her pale face

A tremor crossed her pale face; there was a step in the corridor and someone whistling a bar from "La Bohème."

"Ah!" exclaimed Miss Fulton, "my Rudolf! Come in!" The door opened and Winstanley stood on the threshold.

As Eva was facing the door, their eyes met instantly. Winstanley was transfixed; the color sank from his face,

he

leaving it paler than hers.

"Bien, don't be shy!" exclaimed Adelaide, who saw neither of them. "You certainly have faced two women alone before now. Close the door! The draught is sending lizards up and down my spine. Miss Blackwell, this is Mr. Winstanley, the author of—" As she beheld Eva's face and the

As she beheld Eva's face and the man's, she recognized the presence of tragedy; her pupils widened swiftly.

Her scrutiny helped Eva. Though trembling violently she made no sound. With his presence seemed to come all the familiar atmosphere of their life together; the intoxicating happiness she had known only with him; the living warmth within her that he had created and that had been frozen without him. She felt it her right to fly to the embrace of his arms, the embrace wherein alone she could find an antidote for pain, wherein alone her life was complete. All the past was forgotten at the sight of that familiar face and form; all was forgiven in the delirium of a joy that was as unreasoning as the gladness of a cageworn bird, set free in its native element.

"My new opera," finished Miss Fulton quietly. "Bepo, we have been reading it. Bring that chair over.
. . . I want Miss Blackwell to come to the first night."

"Certainly," said Winstanley.
"That, however, may be a long way

off vet."

The words carried no meaning to her; it was his voice, exquisitely familiar, the voice that had made time alive to her, that had brought the warmth of midday into wakeful dawns, that had illumined darkness at midnight, that had awaked her soul, her passion, the very woman in her. Her nature recognized its creator and thrilled to intense susceptibility. She was almost oblivious of the strain of the situation, save that she felt the other woman's

presence like a bar between herself and him, and this kept her quiet.

Adelaide regarded her. "You will be here in the fall, will you not?" she asked.

Eva looked back into the pale eyes without seeing them.

"Oh, yes—in the fall, yes."

"Bon! Then you shall have a box. Before then you might come down to some of the rehearsals; they will familiarize you with the music; you will enjoy it more when you know it. Bepo, will you bring some whisky from the dining-room? It is chilly here; a little tonic will do us all good.

Eva, like one hypnotized, had every line of his attitude photographed upon her mind; when he rose the charm was shaken. She regained possession of

herself as he left the room.

"I must go," she said softly, and attempted to rise, but a swift faintness overcame her; she sank back.

"You are Adelaide went to her. "What is it? ill," she said.

"Nothing-good-bye. If—if—he will see me to a cab-

"You must take something."

"No, I must go now. I shall be

Winstanley entered, and Adelaide, looking at him critically, said: "Bepo, put her in a cab."

"My auto is here," he returned softly. "Perhaps—will you go in that?"

"Thanks."

"Will you have some of this?"

"No, no; it is better not." She went to the door swiftly, without a glance at Adelaide. That endearing nickname, so out of keeping with her ideal of Winstanley, racked her; she was frantic to be out of sight of this woman whom his presence seemed to have entirely changed, who seemed to have become suddenly menacing and to glory secretly in her advantage.

In reality the singer, though curious, was genuinely troubled by what she saw in the other woman's face. She did not attempt to follow her, but made a sign to Winstanley to do so, and turned to the window, her eyes full of wonder.

Eva's knees shook as she descended the stairs. The feeling of him beside her, the radiating glow of a personality once as intimate as a second self, penetrated like warmth to the centre of her being. She longed to speak merely to attract his attention more exclusively to herself, to feel herself for the moment absorbing him.

But, great as this desire was, she could articulate no word. All the self-possession, all the power she had felt maturing within her during these months of pain, was broken down and destroyed, as a delicate vine before the attack of storm. In his presence she had become as a child; her individuality was benumbed because her sensibilities were too vividly alive to him. As in the past, all the innate cleverness of her nature, all the quick responsiveness and keen perceptions that won the admiration of others, were drowned in an uncontrollable emotional ecstasy. She realized her disadvantage with panic; she knew she was losing an opportunity that would never return, and argued frantically that if she had more time she would be able to control herself; the meeting had been too sudden, the chance too short.

They reached the automobile without exchanging a syllable; Winstanley held out his hand to help her in. She hesitated, then placed hers in his.

"Will you come with me?" she said, trying to speak steadily, but the eyes looking into his were veiled with the love she could not hide. He saw it, and was puzzled how to act. Although he thought her stupid he was sorry for her, and this compassion made him ready for any concession within bounds.

"Why?" he asked. "Are you ill?" "Yes."

He was thoughtful as he helped her in, and then said quietly: "I must tell -her; I shall be back in a moment."

As he entered the house Eva drew a deep breath. He was coming back! He would be with her, she would have him to herself! She must get herself in hand; she must let him feel the magnetism of her developed nature. He must not know that she suffered or that his presence meant so much to her. Now she could do it. She would be coolly clever. She would compliment him upon his choice of associate. She would laugh over the oddness of their meeting; she would draw clever comparisons between the present and the past; treat it all lightly as one unhampered by conventional prejudices should. She would speak of her own ambitions, her voice. Quite serenely she would let him know that, although they were no longer related, it would be nice to see each other at times; that she liked Adelaide Fulton; that she was happy in this atmosphere of freedom; that she was so glad to-

He came out quickly in the long coat he had put off in Adelaide's hall; and at the sight of him her brain became benumbed again, her heart swelled; a delicious pain thrilled through every nerve.

"What is the address?" he asked. She gave it; he repeated it to the chauffeur and got in beside her. She felt the touch of his sleeve upon her arm, and with it came the old sense of completeness she had not known since they parted. As he leaned down to see if the side door was securely fastened, she looked at his profile more closely than she had yet dared.

Its vivid familiarity recalled sharply one of the most serious and unhappy scenes they had ever experienced. a fit of depression and despair of ever winning from him the love she gave, she had committed the fatal mistake of revealing her pain, and, unable to comprehend the frozen severity with which her reproaches were met, had flamed into accusations, even abuse, that only set the barrier higher between them and aggravated her own suffering to a feverish delirium. There had been a brief exchange of hot words, bitter with helpless sorrow on her part, coldly unyielding and reproving on his. She had sought frantically for sympathy, and had met the stone wall of his displeasure. Against this she had beaten herself with the recklessness, the blind insanity of love that has become morbid by feeding on itself. As she had looked upon his cold face then, with the microscopic gaze of moral hunger, its smallest detail had been engraved upon her mind so distinctly as now to be sharply recognizable, even to the few uneven hairs at the end of his eyebrows, the slight indentation at the temples, the dark line about the blue iris of his eyes. This brought back the influence of her suffering and rendered her less courageous, less master of herself. Her nature cowered before the beloved hand that had chastised it. not instinctively, but by reason of the knowledge of its own limitation in relation to him. She had learned too late that while loving him she could never win him, yet the very memory of past humilities augmented his power over her by lessening her self-esteem. She longed to throw off the tyranny of his influence, but her very fear seemed to constitute the only tie now uniting them, because it was born of the time when he had belonged to her. For this reason it was dear, delightful, something to indulge; and, weakened as she was by the long separation, she yielded herself to it in an ecstasy of silent delight in his presence.

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V

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"Are you here for long?" asked Winstanley presently, in that quiet

way she knew so well.

"I don't know-perhaps, yes." They glided out of the narrow street into the crowded avenue, slackening suddenly, now and again, because of the traffic, then speeding on again smoothly as a bird on the wing. In a few moments the journey would end; he would leave her, and she had said nothing, done nothing but what must further debase her in his eyes. He could see no change in her, no development, nothing to interest him. If only she could say something that would make him realize that she was changed, that he was not with a child, but with a woman of experience, of broad views, of character and independence! This silence was insufferable. He would think her sulky, reproachful and basely humble.

The blocks were flying past them; she could see her corner but a little way

"You will think me very stupid," she said desperately, her voice shaken. "It seems so—I had so much to tell you—I mean to say to you; that is, if we ever met! It is strange, isn't it?"

The color came rushing to her face; she turned away that he might not see. Winstanley did not look at her; a puzzled expression came into his eyes.

"Whatever took you to Adelaide Fulton's?" he asked; and Eva, feeling there was reproof in the question, experienced a pang of angry pain that annoyance should be the only emotion he knew in meeting her. She could not answer bitterly—she had no right. He resented her going to the singer's, but she could not complain that he was a familiar inmate there; he belonged to that woman!

A great burning came into her heart; she felt it penetrate to her eyes, and kept them turned away, not daring to speak. The fact that her silence did not trouble him only added to her pain and wrought her to the verge of an excited outbreak to which her utter helplessness was driving her. Yet she experienced no real humiliation in knowing he could feel for her only contemptuous compassion; for the great misfortune of love that has passed the limit of egotism is that it forgets self in its desire to hold as its own the one loved. It is at this point that he who loves must resign hope. The beloved, if already chilled, stands untouched upon the strong pedestal of growing indifference. Calm criticism takes the place of the other's feverish efforts to reach him; he watches with increasing distaste all the contortions, the feebleness, the frantic struggles that so mar what he once admired. The stronger the love, the more debased becomes the lover who starves for requital, and the less sympathetic becomes he whose indifference has wrought it to a state of

Though Eva might clearly and eloquently have preached this to another, she could not practice it. Reason and calculation were gone; she was possessed by the fatal error that her love must win in the end, that its very intensity would make him yield to it.

She felt the break close, and they hissed to the curb before her hotel.

Winstanley got out; Eva did not stir. She was looking straight ahead, her face very white. Winstanley looked surprised and somewhat apprehensive.

"Is this it?" he said.

She turned to him and whispered: "Listen. Come here; I want to tell you something."

He got partly into the car and leaned toward her.

"I want—will you take me a little farther—into the Bois? It does me good. I don't want to go in; I dread going in!"

He hesitated briefly, looking at his gloved hand; then, calling to his man to go on, got in again and pulled the door to sharply.

They were off in a flash, flying noiselessly down the almost deserted Avenue d'Iéna.

"You are angry," said Eva, goaded to it by the pang his displeasure caused her

"No, not angry," he returned. "It seems—a little foolish, this."

Her glance was hot with swift rage that seized her with the sudden fury

"Why foolish?" she demanded passionately. "Do you begrudge me these few moments? Is it much to ask?"

"No, it is nothing; but what can be gained by it? Can't you see it is—wrong?"

"To you, yes; to you! You never wished us to meet again. Fate has brought us together. It means something to me; more than—but what is that to you? I am as though I had never existed to you; less than the stranger you pass in the street. I—the mother of that little soul, your son! The woman who gave her life to you; whose only crime was to love you too well! Oh, Bob, do you ever think, do you ever remember?"

Great tears were swimming in her

wide eyes as she looked at him; and her face, blanched and sunken, quivered in a nervous effort to control herself.

"If I take you seriously in your present condition," said Winstanley, after reflecting, "I shall be doing you a greater wrong than if I had refused

to come with you-

"I am serious!" she interrupted, laying her hand on his arm. "You must not treat me lightly, Bob; I have learned a new philosophy; I am not as I used to be; you can't judge me by today, but later you shall see. I—you see; do you not find me changed?"

A slight, half-indulgent smile crossed

his lips.

"You are as much of a child as ever."
"Oh, no, no! I am not! Why do

you say that?"

"But this, this in itself! Why am I here with you? It is madness; you will see it later."

She sank back, chilled to the heart. The tears in her eyes dried as she looked into the crimson distance of the Bois. Dusk was falling; the vehicles passing them were all homeward bound; some were already alight.

"You are colder than stone," she said bitterly; "harder than— Yes, I shall probably regret this; but why should I? What wrong have I done?"

"No wrong—if it is agreeable to

you!"

They turned into a side road where there was not another vehicle, and flew smoothly along toward the violet haze beyond, where thin branches of trees traced the rosy sky like a network of coarse lace. Neither spoke. Eva, realizing that she had made a mistake, that she had succeeded only in making him uncomfortable with her, condemned herself and forgot his offense. A dull conviction that the lack of sympathy she had always felt in him was owing to some fundamental discordance in her became so real she longed to be rid of him, to shake herself forever out of the rut she had so weakly fallen into, and either begin life anew or die. Her efforts had been futileshe would always be the same to him; always incapable, feeble, as incomprehensible as he was to her. With him she could never be anything but what he had created; her real nature could only be developed apart from him; it was right that they should be

separated.

The world seemed very empty and wide and objectless as she faced this sudden materialization of a suspicion that had long haunted her. There had come a break in the horizon wall, and she saw beyond the broad, lonely plain where he was not—nor her love for him. It was that she would miss the most!

"Shall we turn back?" she said calmly. "It is getting chilly."

Winstanley spoke to the chauffeur, and settled back in his seat. He was relieved, for her manner bespoke a change that dissipated the constraint of their bearing toward each other. His apprehension of a scene vanished; yet he thought it best that she should break the silence lest, by speaking, he might recall to her the influence of their past relations, and his appreciation of her hypersensitive condition at the moment told him this would be a risk.

She seemed as unwilling to speak as he, and they sped over the way they had come in silence, until the increasing darkness made it necessary to have lights, and the car came to a standstill. When they were en route again Eva

said more composedly:

"I don't wonder you think me childish; eccentric would be a better word. This situation is—extreme! Driving in the Bois with my husband who is no longer my husband—an unwilling victim!" She laughed softly and drew her furs more closely about her.

"Don't give me ugly names," said Winstanley. "There's no harm done. I believe in one obeying one's impulses, so long as they hurt no one. This is an experience I could never know again, and I thank you for it."

"I was not suing for pardon."
"I know you were not. I should do that."

"No; I have nothing to forgive you. It would have been easier if I had."

She longed to say that had he been less honest with her she could more readily have put him out of her life; she would never have been guilty of the indiscretion of seeking him again. But she feared the effect upon herself; even the thought made her heart full, made her yearn to lay her head on his shoulder and give vent to the tears stored within.

She leaned farther from him that she might not be tempted beyond her

strength

Winstanley, too, was smothering utterances. He was curious to know how she had become acquainted with Adelaide Fulton, and how well she knew her, but he feared to lead the conversation in that direction.

"Do you think you will make Paris your home?" he asked presently.

"Oh, no! I shall probably leave soon-tomorrow."

"Back to the States?"

"I think not; no. I don't know where, quite."

They left the Bois and took a sweeping curve about the Arc de Triomphe into the crowded thoroughfare once

"I should like to ask you something, Eva," said Winstanley gravely, after reflecting. "Try to be—unconventional about it; to take it as I mean it, not as you did before. We've held a close relation to each other; it is folly to ignore that, because now we see that relation must end. I owe you much. You know what immense income I have. A share of that belongs to you, by right, not through my generosity;

will you accept it?"

Each word fell upon her like a blow; it seemed awful to have this subject brought into that sacred hour. Yet the thought behind the suggestion thrilled her like a caress. She remembered the interval of reflection, and her heart beat high in realizing that he had then been thinking of her, even considering her happiness, longing to do something to add to it. It made her feel that he did not wholly hate her, and she was more grateful than if he had laid an empire at her feet.

She answered after a slight delay, and her voice seemed cold from suppression.

"There is no need, Bob; my father left me comfortably off. I shouldn't

know what to do with more."

"You could lay it up; it wouldn't

bother you."

Eva's hands closed. They were on the Avenue d'Iéna; they would part with this hideous subject uppermost.

"No," she said softly. "I would

rather not speak of it again."

She longed to say something as a relief to this, something that might change the tenor of his thoughts; but nothing appropriate occurred to her, and the car drew up before her hotel without anything further being said.

As Winstanley helped her out she held to his hand on reaching the pavement and laid her other upon it. "Are you happy, Bob?" she asked in an unsteady undertone that told but little of what prompted the question.

"Yes, quite; happier than I deserve

to be, I think. And you?"
"Oh, I'm happy."

She still held to his hand; he could not see her face in the dark, but the

small hands pressed more closely upon his. Her hesitation fretted him, the pressure fretted him. He felt constrained and awkward.

"I'll see you again probably," he said, tightening his fingers about hers a little as a parting salutation.

Eva drew closer to him. "No," she said huskily, "never again. I want—I want you to take me in your arms, Bob; I want you to kiss me once as though I were—as you used to do."

He felt her crush up to him, the familiar, slight form; he felt her catch her breath convulsively like a child that has been punished and comes to "make up," and he knew in that moment that

she had mastered herself.

For the first time in years a tremor of tenderness thrilled through him. He closed his arms about her and held her close, sensing the quick, heavy beating of her heart. As he sought her lips he felt the cold wet of tears upon her face.

"Good-bye, little girl," he said, drawing back from her clinging hands. "You were too good for me; remember that. The fault was mine, all mine—or, rather, the fault of my education."

Eva said nothing; but, as they withdrew from each other, she passed her ungloved hand over his face, as though to get the impression of features she would never see again. He caught it and pressed it between his. "God bless you, Eva! Be happy."

She went in quickly, heeding not what those in the hall might think of

her appearance.

X

It is not the most real despair that excites us to reckless defiance of the conditions ruling our life. There must be a remnant of interest, a lingering love of self and life and the things we try to despise, when desperate means are resorted to for drowning the inner hunger.

Eva did not weep when she reached her room; the tears that last embrace had started dried and stiffened on her cheeks. She sat for a long time just as she had on entering, her hat and coat still on, her gloves in her hand.

She did not think of Winstanley after the first few moments. During that time she had lived over his last words, his embrace, the touch of his lips, until it all faded into an empty future, a wide gulf of time wherein nothing took

shape.

Gradually a decision formed. She must leave Paris at once; she must begin life over; it mattered not where or how, but it must be done. If there was any impression conveyed by this thought it was a vague dread of loneliness. She felt more utterly alone than she had ever done before, for now there was nothing to look forward to, nothing to remember, nothing to suffer.

It was long past the dinner hour when she went to her desk and wrote to Hamilton to come to her.

When the note was despatched she took off her hat and wraps. Her bones

ached for having sat for two hours in one position. She noticed this vaguely, as she raised her arms to tidy her hair. The face looking back at her was haggard and thin; its unfamiliarity was dimly gratifying as being in keeping with the change within. There was no beauty left; she saw this with eyes made critical by long habitude to detect for improvement every smallest defect; yet it caused her no regret. Hamilton loved her; her appearance would make no difference to him! And if it did, what matter?

She ordered tea and toast to be brought to her sitting-room, and settled herself close to the fire. When the tray was being taken away Hamilton

was announced.

"I am so glad you were in," said Eva. "Sit there near to me."

"I have been in always, waiting," he returned, looking at her with tender compassion.

She was watching the fire. "Have

you?"

He could say nothing then; her appearance shocked him; she seemed unfamiliar, like a stranger; one who needed all his tenderness and tolerance. Her loss of beauty was not so apparent to him as her loss of courage. He had been bitter in spirit during the past days, and had stored up some harsh things to say to her when the opportunity should come; but this was not the being who had hurt him. This woman so wan, so needful of his strength, was not one to punish or reproach. Her very unloveliness made him yearn more to serve her, because it made his love more real to him. To lay his love at her feet when she was broken thus was a greater joy than to offer it in the zenith of her healthful beauty, and the realization of this acted as a stimulant to all that was best in him. As his heart yearned over her in that interval he loved his love; he found more substantial pleasure in the prospect of comforting her, even though it must be through sacrifice of himself, than he had known in dizzy moments under her touch or the dream of possessing her as his own.

A log fell forward, throwing a shower of sparks into the room. One lighted upon Eva's skirt, and Hamilton hastily extinguished it. "It didn't burn," he said.

"Will you put the log farther back? It is smoking." He did as she asked, and returned to his chair.

"Have you been here long?" he in-

"A week. Were you at the other house?"

"No."

Eva was still looking vacantly into the fire; she appeared to be paying no attention to what was said. After a pause she glanced at him and asked: "Do you want to know why I sent for you?"

"It is enough that you sent," he replied, with restraint. "I have been waiting, hoping you might—forgive."

"I had nothing to forgive. It is you who should forgive—perhaps—I don't know. But—that is all past. Reginald, I am old now; I am wise, too. Until tonight I have been a child, so blind, so stupid——"

As he saw her lips quiver he leaned forward, resting his head in his hands, in order to conquer the impulse to get down by her side, to take her hands, and beg her to lay her burden on him, to let him help her under any restrictions she might dictate. The thought of her suffering was intolerable to him, and he felt that she was suffering.

But she was not. The tremor was merely the consequence of overstrained nerves. Her strongest desire at the moment was to arrive at some decision about leaving Paris; that was the uppermost thought; the future beyond it held no interest.

She moved restlessly, pushing her chair a little back from the fire. "But that doesn't matter. For the present the important point is that I must leave Paris tomorrow early; will you go with me?"

"You know that I will."

"I am afraid to be alone, that is all; I make no pretenses."

"I understand."

"And yet-" She looked into the

fire a few moments, then got up and crossed the room, touched some photographs on the piano, looked closely at one she cared nothing about, and turned back to him.

He got to his feet. "Do you want

me to go?" he asked.

"I want to know something," she said, looking straight into his eyes. "Do you love me?"

Hamilton paled; he set his teeth that he might not appear foolish. "You know," he said under his breath.

She read in the white, stern face all that he could not and dared not utter, and her eyes shifted from his. "Do you love me enough to—take me as I am, not loving you; my nature hardened, warped perhaps; with the memory of another man in my heart; with the possibility that I may never love you?"

Hamilton's eyes were burning; they were fixed upon her almost fiercely. He folded his arms; his voice was harsh when he spoke. "Eva, do you know"

what you are saying?"

"Yes, I have thought it all over. I shall be your wife, and I shall be a good wife, for I shall have no other interest but you. I said what is not so just now; there is no other man in my heart; no memory—perhaps no heart."

She was turned a little from him now, looking toward the fire, her hands clasped loosely before her. Hamilton hugged his arms closer, fearing to jar her mood by loss of control, realizing that any outburst on his part would be cruelly out of harmony with her.

"I am not offering you much," she said softly, "but perhaps it is the best condition, after all. Real love is never mutual. One loves, the other is loved, that is the law of modern life. If mutual love exists it is a relic of barbarism, and not to be found among the educated."

"It may come," he said. "God knows I shall do my best. You will give new impetus to my life; all that is best in me will develop to win you."

"No, you must not hope for that; you would not be happy. We are creatures of cultivated sensibilities.

Serenity doesn't appeal to us. We want sensations, anxieties, extravagances. If I loved you as you love me the flavor of life with me would be gone; you would look about you for something new; everything—"

"No; you must not say that. Eva, remember, my nature developed in a healthful atmosphere. You may think these things now, but if you will give yourself to me you will be bestowing upon me the greatest happiness ever given a man; and I shall make it my life's purpose that you may share my happiness."

He held out his hands to her, and she

laid hers in them.

"Don't kiss me," she whispered, as he drew her nearer to him. "Tonight I am tired, unnerved. Tomorrow we shall be out of Paris; perhaps I shall feel better."

He drew her gently closer and pressed his lips against the soft hair that he had once kissed in an ecstasy of feeling; now he merely breathed its delicate fragrance as he might the essence of some sacred and fragile flower, holding her as he would a little child, in an embrace as chaste as the love that made him oblivious of everything in life but her.

For a few moments Eva yielded herself motionlessly. A feeling of peace and repose stole over her; she felt pro-

tected, comforted.

Presently she raised her wan face and looked at him steadily, reading all the promise of his love that needed no words. A faint smile crossed her lips; she turned her face against his shoulder, saying softly: "God bless you, Reginald!"

"May He give me strength to be worthy," he said huskily, bending over the bowed head. "All my life shall be

vours, Eva, forever."

Quick steps sounded in the corridor; someone passed the door, then another. Hamilton drew her closer; she stirred and whispered something he could not hear.



SUDDEN RAIN

THEY flash upon the window-pane From skies grown swiftly dark— The wild, keen lashes of the rain; They make my heart their mark!

Even so can tears—tears not my own, The very daylight blind; Across my heart the griefs are blown Of all my human kind!

EDITH M. THOMAS



INEXPERIENCED

⁶⁶I HEAR that Jenkins and his wife fight like cat and dog."
"Well, this is the first time they've been married."

THE OFFICE-HUNTERS

By George Horton

HE impressed one as being mysterious - perhaps dangerous. She was a large woman, with beautiful features and piercing black eves that added to the impression of mystery; no blue-eyed person is ever mysterious. She spoke French, too, on occasion-real French, not the American kind-and this language is often part of the equipment of an adventuress. Of her past history not much was known. It was generally supposed that Monsieur Corot was dead; but, dead or alive, she had succeeded so thoroughly in relegating him to yesterday's "seven thousand years" that nobody ever gave him a thought.

Her present means of support were not well understood, but it was generally supposed that she was a cunning and unobtrusive lobbyist, one of the few who had managed to hang on and make the business go. She was a woman of magnetic presence and her conversation was sprightly and entertaining. Johnny Raddle first met her in the Statue Room of the Capitol, and was introduced to her by Senator Stillwater, the noted Southern orator and foe of the Administration. Young Raddle was on the senator's trail and the latter knew it, and had no further interest in him than to get rid of him on all occasions as inoffensively as possible. The statesman, whose chief ambition was to be as big a thorn as possible in the President's side, could have done nothing for Johnny, and, as the old topical song says, "wouldn't if he could." Nevertheless, the latter was connected with the Raddles of Raddleton, and it seemed best to keep him floating along on purple clouds of senatorial affability.

Stillwater, with his silk hat tilted far back on his head and a bundle of papers in his hand, was standing at the marble feet of James A. Garfield, talking with Mrs. Corot—Madame Corot, she was usually called, in deference to her perfect French. He was evidently amused at something, for the madame never spoke of business except at the right moment.

Raddle stood at a little distance, ostensibly gazing at another statue, yet with the tail of his eye upon the senator, ready to spring upon him or to take up the pursuit again, as the case might require. A fleeting expression of annoyance darkened Stillwater's brow, quickly cleared by a happy thought.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, with seeming delight, "good afternoon, Raddle. Mr. Raddle, this is Madame Corot. Mr. Raddle," he explained sweetly, "is one of our diplomats. He was second secretary at Quexlo during the last Cleveland Administration. Good day, mradame; I must be off. Good day, Mr. Raddle; glad to have met you again, if but for a moment."

Raddle stood looking after him ruefully. Madame Corot smiled—a charming smile of mingled comprehension, amusement and sympathy.

"Did you want something of him?" she asked. There was a maternal tone in the voice, it was so charged with good feeling.

"Yes, I want to be put back in the diplomatic service. He is always pleasant to me, but he generally man-

ages to get rid of me right away. Now he has unloaded me upon you."

"Are you sorry?" with archness.
Raddle lifted a silk tile, revealing a
prematurely bald head, and bowed
with whimsical gallantry.

"I have gained more than I can possibly have lost," he replied readily, "if I am to be numbered among your

acquaintances."

This was not bad. Besides, as she mentally phrased it, "he was a pretty boy and extremely comme il faut." The madame's business lay so much with aged statesmen that she thought of all men under thirty-five as "boys." Her own age was an unknown quantity which no algebra would ever be able to solve. She guarded all illuminating data with a woman's supernatural vigilance in such matters. She appeared young, yet she seemed so unmistakably a woman with a "past" or with many "pasts" that her youthfulness reminded one of that of Rider Haggard's "She" or of Helen of Troy-a sort of blooming immortality, as it were.

"Why do you attach yourself to

Stillwater?" she asked.

"Because he's my senator and all my

people know him."

She laughed. "He can't help you any. His relations with the President are those of the cat with the dog.

Whom else do you know?"

The question evinced an unmistakable desire to help him or to give him advice. As he walked about the rotunda with her he explained all his hopes and his sources of possible influence. She interrupted him from time to time with shrewd comment, intimate psychological betraying knowledge of the great men whom he mentioned, as well as their attitude upon the questions of the day. She was as thoroughly at home in the Capitol as a shoemaker in his shop, and she pointed out to him the peculiarities of some of the worst of the paintings.

"But how did the bad pictures find their way in here?" asked Raddle.

"The poor senators can't all be good judges of art," she replied. "I'm trying now to put through a picture by Villjeon, of Mobile, which is a work of art and belongs here. It is entitled 'San Juan Hill,' and represents the charge of the Rough Riders, with Roosevelt at their head. Villjeon wants twenty-five thousand dollars, and I get five thousand dollars commission." Raddle emitted a shrill whistle.

"You must be a wonderful woman if you can get that much money out of

anybody."

"Not at all. It is quite possible to induce people to spend other people's money—at least, so I've been told. Villjeon asked me to speak to two or three people whom I know about his picture, and they have received me very kindly. I have two votes promised already."

They had passed out of the Capitol now and were descending the imposing

steps on the west side.

You must come and see me and we will have a good talk about your matter. Perhaps I can help you in some way. You help me and I'll help you," she added, handing him a card. As Raddle strolled down the avenue alone, thinking over her last words, the proffer of mutual assistance did not strike him as in the least peculiar. He was well aware that his own influence was nil, and that she knew it, but the words, "You help me and I'll help you," constituted a Washington formula with which he was familiar. the masonic greeting, in fact, among the Outs. For nowhere else in the world are the two great orders of the Outs and the Ins so sharply separated as in the Capital city.

Raddle had been almost in despair before meeting Madame Corot; this office which he much needed was becoming so elusive, such a pot of gold at the rainbow's foot! He realized that he had no especial talent, but he did know how to wear a silk hat and look like somebody, and what more is needed of a second secretary, espe-

cially at Ouexlo?

"There are no politics in my case," he reasoned; "what have I to do with politics? I got it before, and I didn't do anything to help the Democratic party. I live in the District and never vote, and the only interest on earth that I have in the President is that he be some man who will give me this job; otherwise it's all the same to me."

Now that Raddle had met Madame Corot he felt more confident. He was sure that he was to learn how things were really done, that he was to be initiated into the mysteries; he had finally made some progress. While these thoughts occupied his brain he arrived home and told his aunt, with whom he lived, of his adventure.

Mrs. Carleton was a little old woman, as lively as a cricket and as indefatigable as a mosquito. Though sixty years of age, her brain fairly seethed with schemes, and she had planned work for fully forty years to come. But the thing which was chiefly occupying her mind at present was her nephew's candidacy for the second secretaryship. A copy of the State Department Register hung from a nail above her writing-desk, and she knew it by heart; the name of every secretary and consul in the service, the amount of salary and the possibilities from fees in each case.

"You must bring her around to the house," said his aunt. "Madame Corot.—h'm!—Madame Corot. I've heard of her. I'll find out exactly who she is. She may have a great deal of influence. If so, you may have to make love to her a little. She's already attracted to you, and if she falls in love with you in earnest she'll raise heaven and earth to get you the job. Then, too, if she'll help us we'll help her."

Raddle looked into the mirror over the mantel and pulled his mustache.

"Do you think—ah—she's really attracted to me?" he asked.

His aunt laughed dotingly.

"You silly boy! She won't be the first one."

He brought Madame Corot to the house the next evening, and the two women found much in common that they could talk of.

"You help us and we'll help you,"

proposed Mrs. Carleton, though she did not know what Madame Corot was up to nor that she needed help. Mrs. Carleton was always "seeing people" or having them seen; not the people themselves, it is true, but people who knew other people, or who were supposed to be able to reach them directly or indirectly. Once she had waited for six months for the arrival of a Michigan man who had promised to talk with the President himself about her nephew. They had hoped so much from this interview and had looked forward to it with such palpitating anxiety! They even drifted into a state of mind in which they regarded the second secretaryship as secured and began to plan their life after Doolittle's talk with the President. Doolittle arrived at last and stayed two days, during which time the President was absent in Colorado, returning a few hours after the Michigan man's departure.

"If Doolittle of Michigan had only got here a little earlier or had stayed a few hours longer," Mrs. Carleton explained to Madame Corot, "Johnny and I would be in Quexlo now. My husband lent Doolittle seven hundred dollars once when he needed it badly and Doolittle's son was a Rough Rider. So there's a chain for reaching the President," cried the sprightly old lady, "without a single missing link!"

Madame Corot smiled approvingly, out of good nature, but she was not greatly impressed. Alas! It took stronger and much more compelling chains than this to get things really done. "But I'm going up to the War Department tomorrow," continued Mrs. Carleton, "to see a man whose wife is an intimate friend of the wife of the Secretary of State's private secretary."

Madame Corot became an almost daily visitor at the house on New Hampshire avenue, dropping in for luncheon or dinner in the most unconventional manner possible. Mrs. Carleton was fundamentally a good housekeeper and to her other activities she added the duties connected with giving her beloved nephew a good home. Indeed, her chief reason for following him to far distant posts in imagination was that she might make sure that he had a comfortable place to live. In the atmosphere of home Madame Corot seemed to lay off her mysteriousness and to become a simple-minded woman, taking a pathetic interest in the darning of socks and the cooking of sweet potatoes. When she pulled up an armchair—her chair—before the open fire with a sigh of content all suggestion of being "dangerous" disappeared.

Meanwhile Raddle, following his aunt's advice, paid court to her with much fervor and considerable skill. He had been, he represented, simply overwhelmed, swept off his feet, by her irresistible charms the moment his eyes first rested upon her. The aunt felt no scruples, because no one ever thought of Madame Corot in the light

of a victim.

At first Madame Corot did not treat Raddle seriously, but when his earnestness became convincing she assumed a maternal air, and tried to talk him out of his supposed infatuation, always calling him "Johnny," as though he were a little boy.

"Wouldn't it be nice," said Raddle one evening, lifting a soft damp lock from her forehead and twining it gently about his finger, "if I could be restored to the diplomatic service and you could go away with me?"

"If you get back into office," she replied, "you don't want an old woman like me tied around your neck."

"Old!" he cried. "Why keep repeating that to me who thinks you the loveliest, most charming, most beau-

tiful woman in the world?"

"I think, Johnny," said she, holding her knee between clasped hands as she gazed into the dying fire, "that I shall lock you in a dark closet or put you to bed without any supper if you keep on making love to me. I—I—it awakes the woman in me that I thought was dead, and it makes me unhappy, Johnny—just the least little bit unhappy. I could be perfectly

happy, you know, in a hut in the woods with a man that I loved and that loved me. I could cook, scrub, mend for him, perform any menial task if he but loved me. I am not the woman that the world has made of mefew of us are, I think."

"But I do love you, Estelle," he

persisted, taking her hand.

"You are a nice boy, Johnny," she replied, smiling sadly, "and now you may help me on with my wrap and take me home."

The next day she dropped in at Mrs.

Carleton's with great news.

"The widow is coming! I have just received word from her."

"The widow?" repeated Mrs. Carle-

ton

"Yes, my friend, Hermia Galt, of New York. I have often talked with Mr. Raddle about her. Now, there's the woman for him, if we can get her interested in him."

"It wouldn't do her much good, my dear," laughed Mrs. Carleton. "The poor boy has eyes for no one but you.

He talks of you incessantly."

Madame looked serious. "Oh, we mustn't let him fall in love with me," she said; "I am old enough to be his mother—almost."

"You don't look over eighteen at this instant," flattered Mrs. Carleton. And indeed something had dawned in the madame's face and eyes for the moment that was not akin to age.

"If you really love me, Johnny," she said to Raddle later, "you will not allow me to get this office for you. I might succeed, but oh, the price! the

price!"

That evening she found in her apartments a note from Senator Cartwright, inviting her to lunch with him next day. Her face flushed as she read and grew eager and unfeminine.

"I have got him at last," she whispered. But a softer look soon came into her eyes, and she murmured in French, "Mais, si je suis aimée? Any woman who wears the crown of love is too good for this business."

She had been working and scheming with all her siren wiles to obtain this

invitation, and now she sat down at her desk and wrote a note of refusal.

The widow Galt arrived from New York and put up at the New Willard. Raddle called upon her there with Estelle and took dinner with the two women. The widow was a tall, slender blond, with a long neck. Her apartments, her gowns, her diamonds, her wines and the carriage, which she kept constantly at beck and call, bore evidence of her wealth. It was rumored that the late Mr. Galt, a New York Board of Trade man, had left her over a million.

"Estelle," she remarked to Madame Corot the second evening after her arrival in Washington, "that poor boy is daft over you. He is really in love with you. What are you going to do

with him?"

"I think I shall let him love me," she replied, her hands clasped over one knee, a favorite attitude. "Love is worth more than all else in the world, and when it comes to one at my time of life it is the pearl of exceeding great price."

Going over to the piano she sang a Creole love ditty, a simple little thing

for young hearts.

"Ah, well, if he loves you," sighed Hermia, who, like most widows, was sentimental, "you have my blessing. He's a handsome young man, and he certainly has charming manners."

It will be seen from this that Mr. Raddle made a stronger appeal to the sex than he was himself aware of.

"We might get you into the consular service," said Mrs. Carleton one night to her nephew. "There's Naples, for instance. Goodness, Johnny,

look at all these fees!"

The State Department Register was open on her lap, and Raddle was glancing over her shoulder. They looked into each other's eyes, now raptly, joyfully. For the moment they imagined themselves at Naples.

"I must read up on Naples," mused Mrs. Carleton. "No doubt one could write a series of magazine articles from there and perhaps give English lessons. How are you coming on with madame? Has she promised to see anyone for you yet? She promised to help us if I

would help her."

"Women," replied Raddle, "are queer things. The more I convince her of the sincerity of my affection, the less eager she seems to be to do anything for me. By Jove, Aunt Charlotte!" he chuckled, "I'll never get over wondering how I—how a baldheaded and impecunious chap like me could have raised such havoc in the breast of that superb, that extremely sophisticated creature."

"You are too modest," replied his aunt, gazing at him fondly. "You could be a great lady's man if you wished. You have a wonderfully tak-

ing way with the women."

"Do you really think so?" he asked earnestly, as though he had been thinking of this same matter before; and then added: "If a fellow really were a lady charmer nothing would be too good for him. Opportunities sometimes arise that a man would be a fool not to take advantage of, if he could."

It was not so very long after this conversation that Mrs. Galt began to wonder whether or not Mr. Raddle were making love to her. At first she took for granted that he held her hand rather longer than necessary and gazed admiringly at her, simply because she was Estelle's friend.

"He likes me," she thought, "be-

cause he loves her."

But Mr. Raddle's actions soon set her to doubting on this point. Her eyes were opened particularly by the fact that he sought her society alone, whenever possible, and made her feel that Madame Corot was the third that makes "a crowd."

He put the matter beyond conjecture one night in Estelle's rooms. He had called on the widow, but she had loyally insisted on taking him

around to see her friend.

"Madame is out," said the landlady, "but I expect her back every minute. She said you were always to go right into her rooms and make yourselves at home."

They did so.

"Don't you think that's a lovely picture of Estelle?" asked Mrs. Galt, standing before a small oil painting on the mantel. "It was painted by an artist, a friend of hers, now dead. Estelle is a very beautiful woman; no picture can do her justice."

"I suppose she is beautiful," replied Raddle, in a sepulchral tone. "I used to think her so, but I have no eyes for her any more. I-I feel like a criminal, like a blamed scoundrel," he cried passionately, "but I can't help it."

Can't help what?"

"That I do not love her any more. I do not believe now that I ever loved her. I thought I did, and there is no reason why any man should not love her. She is beautiful and sweet, and all that. Perhaps if you had not come along I should have continued thinking that I did love her. But I see now that she lacks those spiritual charms which make you irresistible to me."

Had Mrs. Galt been a young girl she would have been indignant, but young widows are not surprised at declarations

of love from any source.

"'Sh! 'Sh!" she said; "I shall not listen to you. Estelle is my friend, and you must put this silly notion out of your head immediately and never mention it again, or I shall go right back to New York."

He raised his hands in entreaty.

They were trembling.

"Oh, do not go away," he cried hoarsely. "I will never speak of it again, if you so command. But do not go away. I live only when in your presence. I-I had no hopes anyway," he faltered, resting his elbow upon the mantel and his forehead in his palm, "I am only a poor devil of a fellow with no prospects, and you are rich and beautiful. What would you want of me? But I tell you now," he cried fiercely, looking at her with burning eyes, "that if you were a poor girl I should win you. You couldn't help yourself. You wouldn't be able to resist such love as mine. I shall never marry Estelle. It wouldn't be fair to her, with my heart full of love for another woman. I have too much regard for her for that."

The widow glanced uneasily at the

. "Stop! Stop!" she said. "Estelle will be here in a minute, and she will see that you are agitated over something. You must go right away now; you mustn't remain here another second. I will give you a good talking to some other time.'

She managed to get him out of the rooms, and sank into a chair with a sigh of relief, imagining that she had

made a diplomatic move.

"Don't worry about it," said Estelle, entering from her bedroom. "I heard all and do not blame you at all." She was smiling, but was white to the lips. "You can have him. I give him up to you freely. It would be a shame if you did not take him, for the poor fellow loves you, there's not a doubt about that."

"Nonsense!" said Hermia, rising and putting her arms around her friend He loves you. This is but a passing madness, an infatuation, and I will soon cure him of it. You are so much more beautiful than I, I am sure he loves you. He can't help it."

Madame Corot behaved admirably, permitting herself but one little shaft of bitterness, which was quite excusa-

ble under the circumstances.

"He can't be after your money, Hermia," she said sweetly, as her friend was leaving. "He was too earnest for that!"

The shaft took effect, for it was aimed at a tender spot. Like many another rich woman, Hermia was haunted by the ever present fear that it was her money and not herself which formed the real attraction among her admirers.

"Estelle is spiteful as a cat," she murmured; "if Mr. Raddle loves me instead of her I'm sure I can't help it. I haven't given him the least encouragement, I'm sure. His eyes were positively beautiful tonight when he was pleading with me."

Mr. Raddle remembered Hermia's promise to give him "a good talking to," so he lost no time in calling upon her again. He remembered that he had seemed to be making something of an impression on the previous occasion, so he resumed the same line of attack. The widow was kind, and, there being no danger of an audience now, was quite at her ease.

"It is disloyal for me even to listen to you," she murmured; "Estelle is my

best friend."

"There is no disloyalty in it," he replied, "because in any case I shall not marry Estelle. I regard her too highly. How could I marry another woman, with your beautiful image always in my mind? Every kiss, every caress that I gave her would be for you—oh,

it would be terrible!'

"Poor Estelle!" sighed the widow; "somehow I feel to blame in this, yet I cannot see how. You-vou were speaking of my money," she continued sweetly, "and you really touched me. It was so noble of you to wish that I were a poor girl! It is no wonder that you appeal to women-with such noble sentiments. I feel that I ought to tell you; my husband left all his money to me on condition that I remained single. He feared that I might fall a victim to some adventurer. If I marry again it all goes to found an eye and ear hospital in Indianapolis. You know the poor man was as deaf as a post."

"Wa-was he?" gasped Raddle.
"No, I did not know. What a dreadful affliction deafness is! To lose the sight of your ears and not to be able to see what people are saying to you! You—you say he founded this asylum in Indianapolis? What do you advise one to do for deafness? My poor aunt

is growing deaf."

The widow laughed merrily. He was embarrassed, terribly embarrassed, and evidently desirous of leading the conversation to the subject of deafness and of keeping it there. He stammered along for about five minutes, much to her enjoyment, when she remarked shyly, in the midst of an agonizing pause: "I would readily sacrifice everything my husband left me for

love. What is a little money if two

people love?"

"What, indeed?" cried Raddle.
"Nothing! I heard of a man once and a man shouted to him, 'It's a pleasant day!' and this man was deaf and the man had to shout it half a dozen times, and when the man found out that the man was only saying, 'It's a pleasant day,' he only grunted, he was so disgusted. Well, I must be going. Good night, Mrs. Galt."

As he walked down the street the late Mr. Galt seemed a living and malignant enemy, who was enjoying Raddle's discomfiture with a Mephistophelian

grin.

As Madame Corot did not appear at his aunt's house for several days, he called upon her. He found her quite pleasant, but different, somehow. There was a smile in her eyes, but it was not the old smile of tenderness. He arose to go at last, awkwardly, and she followed him to the door.

"Poor Johnny!" she laughed gaily, "you are not shrewd enough to cope with women. Mrs. Galt's husband left her only a hundred thousand dollars. She has a million in her own right. And you had made such havoc with her tender young heart! It's a pity all round that you couldn't have been less stupid."

The next day Raddle and his aunt were walking along the Rock Creek Road

together.

"Why," exclaimed Mrs. Carleton,
"I do believe that was Senator Cartwright in that carriage with Madame
Corot! He can get you into office by a

single word."

"Oh, I've botched things all up with the madame," confessed Raddle. "I'm a chump, an all-wool and yard-wide chump, that's what I am. I haven't brains enough to fill a hollow pinhead." And he explained.

His aunt looked at him fondly.

"It all comes of your being too fascinating, Johnny," she said cheerfully and admiringly. "But never mind. I am going to see a woman tomorrow who will see the President's wife for us!"

DESOLATION

WEARY of the burden of these days, These heavy days when we are far apart. No empty winning in the worldly mart Can ever profit us; no idle praise Can compensate us for our love's delays. There come from Life's dark forest where thou art Only the echoes of my crying heart-Thy lone cries borne along the barren ways.

Outside the brooding fold of thine embrace The sunbeams burn me and the shades affright. I am a wind-blown meteor in space Robbed of the guidance of thy love's great light. My life without the beacon of thy face Is wasted on the ways of outer night. ELSA BARKER.



A CONDITION

"I HAVE not much to offer you."

The youthful lover sighed as he spoke, looking down humbly into the

eyes of the beautiful girl who was so dear to him.
"No, darling," he continued. "My father left me only eight hundred millions and the interest in his business. My family, as you know, is not as old as it might be, our utmost efforts to trace it beyond the Conquest being hitherto unrewarded. But such as I have, as little as it is, is yours to struggle on with as you will."

She gazed at him trustfully.

"Never mind, darling," she said. "I will take you, just as you are, on one condition."

"And that?" he murmured anxiously.

"Is this," she replied earnestly, "that you don't ask me to use my position in society to support you by playing bridge.



OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS

ENNY—Their engagement has been broken by mutual consent. KATE—Isn't that tantalizing! I'll never be satisfied until I find out which one broke it.

HARMONY JACK

By Grace MacGowan Cooke

Country of the ranch till you can pull yourself together, Van Cott; I'm not going to dispossess a man just because he's new to the work and has made some mistakes. I can wait for the interest, as well as the principal."

"Pull myself together!" echoed the other. "And when I get myself to-

gether what have I got? Why, I've got a man that knows nothing about the business; a man as bound to fail as you are to succeed, Golden."

As Van Cott finished, the tall fellow in the dress of a ranch rider rose from the table and strode uneasily to the window. "I won't foreclose," he reiterated. "Think of something better."

"I don't deny that it would be an accommodation," began Van Cott again, trying his speech word by word, as a cautious pedestrian tries a rickety bridge, plank by plank. "I bought this place to bring my wife out, on account of the climate. She's gone—poor Lucy—but I did want to have her sister with me for one season. It would—it would do wonders for the girl. She's had a hard time. She's disappointed and disheartened." He glanced up at Golden's irresponsive back and pushed a framed photograph across the table. "That's her picture—she's a good-looker, isn't she?"

The young ranchman, rich, successful, as inexperienced as a child concerning such nets as were now being spread for him, took up the picture and studied it. The simplicity which the fashionable woman has of late affected fostered the impression Van Cott had been clumsily putting forward. The

eyes looked out from the photograph, dark, grave, direct, almost melancholy; and poor Golden's heart gave a throb of sympathy for the girl who was disappointed and unhappy.

"You'd like her," Van Cott went on, "and she's crazy about this life out here and all I've told her of the people. I'd like to keep the ranch long enough to have her here with me awhile."

Like an evil vapor or an ugly odor, the shameful understanding invaded Golden's consciousness that the Eastern man was offering his sister-in-law as a final payment on the ranch. Before his mind flitted the accounts he had heard of how beautiful young women were as certainly bought and sold in the fashionable world of today as in an Eastern slave market. His lips had parted for a short, sharp denial of the other's hinted request, when his eyes fell once more on the photograph. Was it her fault? She looked like a good woman—she plainly was not a happy one. Her sheer loveliness, too, laid a strong hold on him. He stood for a moment silent, then spoke again:

"You may bring the lady out here—you may stay on the ranch as long as you please, if you'll agree to my terms—my arrangement," he said bluntly. "I'm going—" He hesitated. "I'm leaving here for Old Mexico for six weeks. I guess she can finish her visit before I get back. If she likes this life I'll not deny her a chance to enjoy it nor stand in the way of your entertaining her."

He looked down at his brown hand upon the table. He held his gaze there by sheer force of will for a moment, but it once more traveled, evidently without his consent, to the pictured face. The black eyes looked at him reproachfully; the sweet lips seemed folded over many things they would have told to him, ungracious. "If your sister-in-law should choose to marry some cow-puncher and remain in this country," he went on in a very low tone, "the ranch is yours-you may take it as a gift from her."

"Is that a bet?" inquired Van Cott doubtfully. "If so, I- No, I don't

think I'll take you.

"It's not a bet," returned Golden shortly. "You may take it or leave it -the offer remains. Send for Miss Hexter; I'm off for Old Mexico-I think I'll leave Tres Pinos and everything in

charge of Harmony Jack."

Van Cott threw back his head with a shout of laughter, which the sight of the other's serious face suddenly checked. "This is a plain matter, said the Westerner. "I see your game and I'll have none of it. A woman can't be offered to me like a filly or a heifer. You take what I promise you, and that's all you get from me." And he strode out, leaving Van Cott between irritation and amusement.

II

SHE was particularly well groomed; from the top of her sleek dark head, with its rich roll of straight black hair, which one would have felt rather impertinent to call a pompadour, to the hem of her speckless white linen, she was immaculate-"the latest thing in morning dress for young ladies."

If she had been set in the Casino, with the beach and its bathers before her, if she had been looking off over the links at Lenox, there would have been nothing specially remarkable about her, except that she was The Thing As It Should Be.

But she sat upon the rickety porch of a New Mexican ranch house, a desolate, squalid little adobe building huddled mendicant-like on a treeless flat. She looked not at links or beach. but over a vast browbeating plain; and she was as little afraid of it, as composed in the face of its difficulties. as she had been all her twenty-two vears of life in the face of the human world.

Such a woman, in such attire, was as odd in her situation as a tiger walking in the snow; yet she somehow seemed appropriate by sheer force of her personal poise and harmony. In the in-tervals of writing upon a letter held on the tablet in her lap, the grave black eves interrogated the endless levels

quietly.

"You lived through, didn't you?" called a gay voice in one of these moments of industry. The black eyes looked up from their writing, to find themselves confronted by a pair of laughing blue orbs, long-lashed and set in a sunburned countenance that she could but remember. This was a cowboy whom she and her brother-inlaw had encountered as they drove over from the railway, and who had accompanied them home and remained for dinner the night before. If memory served her Van Cott had called him "Harmony Jack." He was riding a different horse this morning, and he was good to see, in his carefully careless garb, the pony groomed like a cavalryman's mount.

"I lived through," she echoed grave-"Won't you come in, Mr. ---?"

ly. "Won't you come in, sur."

"Jack — Harmony Jack. Everybody has a nickname out here, you know."

"Except myself-and I'm a newcomer," the girl returned, smiling slightly as the man flung himself from his horse and, leaving the animal standing, the bridle trailing on the ground before him, sat down on the porch edge below her.

"Oh, you've got yours all right. I nicknamed you last night, and it

stuck."

The man leaned his head back against one of the rough porch posts, his big white cowboy hat on his lap, the sun glinting on his yellow hair and thick, up-curled eyelashes.

"Would you mind telling me-?" she began, with a note of formality.

"Not a bit," he returned easily. "You're 'the Queen of Sheba.' Van

Cott said it was a fit."

An unaccustomed red came into the girl's clear, dark cheek. "It was very silly of me to wear such a gown. My brother should have told me-I myself should have known better; but dinner has always meant a dinner frock to

me; and I-

"Oh, no apologies are in order. We think the best is none too good for us out here. We liked the dress-a frock you called it, didn't you?-we liked the frock and the wearer. They seemed to go together. I don't know that I called you the Queen of Sheba on account of that though," thoughtfully.

"What particular queenly attributes of mine, then?" The girl was dimpling and smiling now, with a tempered de-

liciousness.

"Queenly? Oh, I don't know; it was the circumstances, I guess."

"Circumstances?"

"Why, you know there was Solomon. He had three hundred wivesrange count, I reckon-and when Sheba brought her outfit into his pastures he just sided her, and left those three hundred ladies to entertain each other; he couldn't see one of them.'

Miss Hexter passed lightly over this tribute to her charms. It was evident to her that New Mexico had its own sort of pretty speeches. "I haven't met any gentleman with three hundred-" she was beginning, when the

newcomer interrupted:

"You aren't likely to see many Mexicano ranchmen with three hundred wives," he agreed. "A man thinks he's lucky out here to get one. It's even hard for a man that's been raised in these parts to imagine such an overstocked market of connubial felicity. But if a fellow can imagine a thing like that"-he threw back his head with that movement which seemed characteristic and looked at her directly, innocently, as a child looks-"it seems to me that you'd be like the Queen of Sheba, and that when you came along he'd leave those dear ladies lamenting. That's why I

gave you the name."

"Nonsense," laughed Miss Hexter. "You've gone all that way around, and invented all that stuff, to escape acknowledging that you called me the Queen of Sheba because my gown was too fine for the occasion last night."

Harmony Jack did not deny the impeachment. "The frock wasn't too fine for the wearer." he said softly.

For an hour or more these two sat on the porch and talked together. The girl's mind, in spite of her culture, of what one might call her sophistication, was nearly as primitive as the man's; and they harmonized in a certain directness and largeness of view which belonged to both.

'Say," said Harmony Jack, with a child's unconscious sigh, "I'd been saving up all these things for years to

say to you, hadn't I?"

Not any more than I had been saving up my answers. I think," re-

turned Miss Hexter gaily.

"Oh, but you've been out among a lot of people all your life," the man "Having somebody—somebody you like to talk to and that savvys something above the cattle business, isn't the absolute novel shock to your sensibilities that it is to mine.'

"Yes," said the girl, looking dreamily off across the plain, "I've been brought up in public, as you might say. I've been taught that the business of life was to keep gabbling; but after all, we never said anything

to each other."

"What did you talk about, at those places you'd go to? Receptions and balls, and-and-well, the opera. If you trust the funny papers, fashionable New York people do a lot of their talking at the opera. You spoke of things," a little wistfully, "that I wouldn't know the first word about, would I?"

"We didn't," protested Miss Hexter; "we didn't talk about things at all; we talked about nothings-when we didn't talk about people.

"You know a lot," murmured the man admiringly; "but there are a good many things—about the life out here-that are right interesting, and

that I can tell you."

"Indeed there are," returned the young lady, with a warmth of which she was scarcely conscious. "We'll just resolve ourselves into a mutual information bureau and complete each other's education." Did her mind misgive her that she might teach this man, in a sphere so utterly removed from her own, too much?

"Well, I must be going," declared the cowboy, rising and looking down at his hostess: "I'll come for my next lesson tomorrow, and I'll bring a horse. I want you to ride, so that I can have a chance to make a fair exchange of information. Will you be at home in the morning?"

"I'll be at home in the morning. Where on earth could I go?" smiled the girl. "You at the Tres Pinos are the only neighbors we have within

forty miles, Sully tells me."

The man called "Cinco!" scarcely raising his voice. The pony tossed up his head and trotted forward to the porch edge, cleverly holding his head on one side to avoid the trailing bridle reins. Miss Hexter noticed the superb workmanship of the Mexican saddle, with its tapideros and embroidered saddle blanket. She knew too little of the country to be aware that the man himself was dressed in garments more expensive than those that clothe an Eastern clubman. He swung himself into the saddle, pushed the pony to the porch edge, where he was on a level with the girl, and turned to shake hands. There was something in the situation that inevitably suggested a lover's parting.
"I was wondering—" he began,

and broke off. He sat so long silent, still looking down at her, that the girl

flushed uneasily.

"You were wondering whether it would rain tomorrow?-what time it was?"

"I was wondering"-and his big voice dropped to a very soft, low note -"I was just wondering how poor old Solomon felt when the Queen of Sheba went home."

Then he was gone, too skilful to risk an anticlimax. She stood looking after him for a moment, as the morning sun caught and flashed on one bit of his accoutrement or another, lingering nowhere so long as in the thick, close-cropped yellow hair.

"Sully told me I should find some queer fish," she said to herself. "But," she added in a tone of self-justification, "he certainly said that I was to be

civil to all of them."

And if she were aware of having been more than civil to Harmony Jack her placid young face gave no evidence of the fact.

III

MISS DOROTHY HEXTER sat at breakfast with her brother-in-law. "When am I to see the man?" she asked, buttering her sour-dough biscuit with a leisurely hand.

"The man!" echoed Van Cott irri-"Lord, Dot! I should think you'd seen men enough since you've

been here."

"Cowboys," corrected his sister-in law. "I was wondering when you were going to present the owner of

Tres Pinos.

"And the owner — the practical owner - of this ranch. Don't forget that, my dear Dorothy. This ranch and several others, besides his gold and silver mines. Hang it, but he's a lucky beggar."

Miss Hexter looked at her brotherin-law with distaste. "You mean he's lucky because I desire to meet him," she suggested smoothly.

Van Cott chuckled. "You women can twist anything into a compliment,"

he commented.

"I can't twist the behavior of your man of Tres Pinos into a compliment, retorted Miss Hexter. "I don't think he's particularly anxious to make my acquaintance. It would seem as if

your-

"Well, he's-away, just at present," cut in Van Cott hastily. "You seem deucedly well entertained with your cow-punchers and such." He shot a quick, keen glance at her composed face. "Hang it all, Ah Sin! bring me some coffee with coffee in it-this stuff's slop," he said to the attending Chinaman, pushing aside his cup with a shaking hand. Van Cott's morning head needed more potent waters than any Ah Sin was likely to bring.

"Too weak to run out of the coffeepot if there was a hole in it," sug-

gested Miss Hexter.

"That's one of Harmony Jack's jokes," laughed Van Cott, with another sharp, examining glance. "You seem to have struck up quite a friendship with-with-"

Miss Hexter raised her dark eyes and looked very squarely at her brother-in-

law.

"-with a good many of these cow-

punchers," he concluded.

"You told me to be civil to all of them; and I find them extremely amusing. The little Scotchman-by the way, if he comes in for the title, he would have no trouble in marrying money—isn't nearly such good fun as the natives."

"You don't want to get your affections tangled up with any of these-

Miss Hexter rose and looked down at her brother-in-law disgustedly as she pushed her napkin back in place "My dear Sully, upon the table. she remonstrated, "one would think to hear you talk that I was a schoolgirl enjoying her first taste of masculine society. Pray remember that I have been through three New York seasons and that I belong to the Hexter family, never known to set sentiment above advantage. Add to your reflections that I've not been a success in getting off, and that the entire family has clubbed together to capitalize the scheme of sending me out here to youto New Mexico-to mend the family fortunes by this rich marriage."

"Oh, come now! You put it bru-

you might have been mistaken in tally—women always do when their your—" He was a dull man, with a long drab face, flushed under its natural gray by heavy drinking. He took his big head in his two hands, and looked at his young sister-in-law reproachfully.

> "You Hexters have married confoundedly well," he ruminated. "Even poor Lucy. Hang it all! I had a pot of money when Lucy married me.

> Miss Hexter was angry enough to say that one fact bespoke the other; but she was quite too well-bred. She merely bent her head with a little

frosty smile.

"My dear Sully," she repeated, "you are addressing a modern young woman who finds herself getting shopworn upon the matrimonial bargain counter. I might go to the theatre to be amused; I might seek my modiste to indulge my taste for beauty; I should carry neither expectation into my matrimonial plans.

Van Cott rose with a little, jarring laugh. "Oh, God-you women! You're all alike. I suppose the hint in that speech is that matrimony is cold

business."

Before Dorothy's mind came a vision of two honest blue eyes, merry, tender, brave, looking from a sunburned face. She could see the curve of the red lips under the blond mustache, the flash of the white teeth over which they parted so readily. An honest, vivid face, young—so young so full of that immortal youth which would never die out of it, which is pressed out of the hearts and faces of men by the great grinding wheels of city life. She answered almost fiercely, answered more that visioned face than her brother-in-law's words:

"You know, Sully, that it has to be business with me. I'm not situated so that I can indulge in sentiment."

IV

"SHE'LL turn you down," said Van Cott, with an ugly grin. "Lord, you might have known it-expect a woman

to be disinterested—around here doing the Claude Melnotte act-

"Hold up," interrupted Harmony Jack. "I've had just all I can take of that, Van Cott."

The elder man was sore and angry. His own advantage openly lay in marrying his sister-in-law to John Golden. He regarded the ranchman as a person able and—if he thought so—willing to buy. His sister-in-law, as he himself would have phrased it, "had the goods to deliver." She was even handsomer and more fascinating than Golden had any right to expect. This little comedy which endangered the legitimate results of the plan galled what Van Cott called his plain common sense.

Suddenly he came to a decision, and his manner changed; he slapped the

other on the shoulder.

"It'll be all right, my boy; I'd gamble on it. The girl doesn't know her own mind yet. Don't ask her todaygive her till tomorrow-ask her then."

The inference was too obvious, and instantly the ranchman towered above his short, rotund adviser. "You say one word to influence her decision, and by God! I'll wring your neck," he re-

torted savagely.

Van Cott with a rueful face rubbed the shoulder upon which the other's grasp had been set, and in his heart anger mounted against the pair of them. "Did I even suggest such a thing?" he inquired sullenly. "Run it your own way, you great, overbearing idiot. So far, you've certainly made a nice mess of it."

They had been waiting for the girl to come out for her usual afternoon ride, and Van Cott watched with sullen eyes as Dorothy was put upon her pony and the pair rode away. Beautifully matched, even his unsentimental soul rated them, with something akin in their poise and simplicity of manner.

Meantime the ponies loped easily together, and Dorothy stole a look at her companion's profile. She had long since promoted him from the ranks of a pastime, something pleasant to be exploited and forgotten, to that position he had set himself to win, of a man to be reckoned with, one to be considered as a possible mate. And now his impatience bade fair to spoil all. He was showing her plainly that he was ready to offer her a share in his lot of poverty, toil and hardship-that he would offer it to her without apology. without any softening of its angles or objections-offer it to her-Dorothy Hexter! Common sense prompted the swift putting of him in his place. wondered at herself to be so moved, so dominated, by an ordinary cowboypoor, perplexed Dorothy could not know how extraordinary a cowboy Harmony Jack was.

He took, from the first, the upper hand, assuming that she belonged to him, and that she was merely making some permissible feminine delays in her capitulation. When he had put the matter before her with such plainness as she would permit, she began:

"You see one phase of my character here, Jack, and people at home in New York see an entirely different side. You would not recognize the Dorothy Hexter of that existence; she would be a creature foreign to all your ideas." This as a preface to that "no" which she must eventually say.

The big man reached over and took one gauntleted hand in his. "People feel that way about themselves, you know," he reassured her; "but the fact is that you would be you-for mewherever you were and whatever you

were doing."

This was not a hopeful beginning; and Miss Hexter fell away from her ideal of what this interview should be by letting the hand remain clasped and proposing the postponement of all personal discussion till they had raced together and he had given her his usual lesson in the handling of a rope. So it came about that they were drawing close to the house when she again felt it necessary to begin.

"I can't make you understand about me. You think I'm just-well, that I'm honest and direct, and all that."

"I sure know it," rejoined Harmony Jack in a contented tone; "and when you make me a promise you'll keep it."

"My specialty is supposed to be avoiding the making of promises—I don't break them," agreed Miss Hex-

ter.

"But you'll make one to me," as-"But you is man, with a ring of serted the man, with a ring of this deep voice. "It's mighty little I have to offer you, from some points of view; but I love you better than any man ever will—that's so. You're charming and you're dear; but a fellow with a life full of beautiful things can't feel toward you as I do. It's a sacrifice for you to take a cowpuncher like me-well, say it is. I'm not afraid to ask you to make it. I'm not afraid you'll regret it; you're not the regretting kind. There are lots of chances for a man here in the West. I'll be whatever you want me to-but I can't be it without you."

She had tried to stem the tide of this speech, but it would not be silenced. It had occurred to her for the first time that this man, from his own point of view, was offering her a great deal. Now she began slowly, with a very

pale face:

"I ought to have told you before— I want you to hear now—why I came

to New Mexico."

"Never mind that, Dorothy," he said softly, lifting her from her pony at the ranch house door. "I've brought you back home. Are you willing to go in with me and say to Van Cott——?"

They halted in the bare little room which was called a parlor at the ranch house, and served for many other pur-

poses.

"I want to tell you," the girl began, with slowly crimsoning cheeks, "why I came out here. John Golden, the owner of Tres Pinos, has a mortgage on this ranch—and—of course you know—he's a very rich man."

The words stuck in her throat. It was not alone that she loved this simple fellow before her—though she now admitted the fact freely to herself—it was something more, which made it hard to explain the thing to him; and yet it must be done.

"I came out here to marry that

man," she burst forth. "I made my plans for it, just as you would go up to Magdalena to buy cattle. My brother-in-law wrote me of him. Of him! He wrote little enough to me of the man; he wrote me concerning his possessions, that he thought I could make the running—seeing that he had never been about much nor met many women of my type."

"Yes?" assented the other. He had not drawn near to her, he had not tried to touch her as she stood, eagerly, passionately tearing down, with trembling hands, the structure of his respect for her, and, as she half hoped, half dreaded, of his love as well.

"Isn't that enough? Do you want such a woman as that? Could such a woman as that want you? I haven't succeeded in marrying John Golden, I haven't made the attempt, only because the man is not here—my inten-

tion was good."

"Oh, no," murmured Harmony Jack, with a laugh in his blue eyes, "it wasn't that—it's because I was here. Do I want you?" the big voice, honey-sweet, dropped to its lowest vibrant tone. "Oh, dearest, I'll be a hundred years trying to show you how much I want you!"

"It isn't that alone, Jack." She flung out a hand as though to push him away. "I'm not saying yes. You won't understand. It isn't that I don't care for you; but that's the way I've regarded things always. I've been brought up to such ideals. I'm not

sure I've got over it."

He answered softly: "You've been brought up to look at things that way, and if you can say you're willing to marry a cow-puncher that gets forty dollars a month and his board, and"—with a sudden flash of laughter—"offers to share both of them with you, I'll tell you what I think, my little girl; I think you're one woman in a thousand."

She drew a swift breath and tried to call prudence, reason, Hexter pride to her aid. Useless, vain and foolish! They fled away, pitiful and shrunken, and left her half exultant and half dismayed at the new sense of freedom. at the new creature within her which rose up defiantly and went forward with direct, unfaltering steps to meet the honesty of the man before her, who stood meanwhile waiting for her word.

Slowly she raised her eyes. As they met his he saw that her shaken citadel

had fallen.

"Oh, dearest!" he cried under his breath, and would have caught her to

him.

"Wait!" she said, staying him with a forbidding hand, as a wave of distrust broke over her again; "wait; you are not sure of me yet-because I can't be sure of myself. I'll answer

you when I tell Sully."

Perhaps her underthought was that with Sully's presence she might come back to sanity and her usual point of view. Be that as it may, the man moved toward the back of the house, and it is to be recorded that she followed, drawn by the hand which her lover held in his own.

Van Cott was sitting on the rickety back porch, smoking. He was, as he himself would have phrased it, a drink or two ahead, and he looked them up and down with a delighted chuckle-things were coming his way

at last.

"By the Lord!" he laughed, "this breaks the record. Dorothy Hexter trotting out to announce to me that she's decided to marry a cow-puncher!"

The girl drew back with crimson cheeks, her pride and sense of fitness shocked, her slowly roused but implacable temper proving her lover's best ally. "Sully!" she ejaculated.

That worthy slapped his knee and laughed. "I see you, in my mind's eye, dragging around from dugout to shack in the wake of this beautiful cow-puncher! Oh, Dot, it's im-

mense!"

Again came the warning "Sully!" from his sister-in-law, but success had quite turned Van Cott's head. "You're an elegant specimen, you are," he pursued, turning to Harmony Jack. "I reckon I was the biggest fool this side of New York when I admitted you to my house and my table, where this innocent young creature

Dorothy looked at her lover's countenance of rage and embarrassment. Van Cott was the only happy member

of the trio.

"You have lost your chance to interfere, Sully," she said, with chill hauteur. "He has asked me to marry him; and"—defiantly—"I shall say yes!"

"You will?" inquired Van Cott. "Well, the Hexters always land on their feet. It won't be long now till you learn what this great idiot has been at so much pains to keep from you; that everybody out here has a nickname, and that the nickname of John Golden, proprietor of Tres Pinos, is Harmony Jack.



PERFECTLY DREADFUL

HERE," said Mrs. Bickers, who had been reading the paper, "is an account of a man who chopped his wife up and fed her to the chickens. Wasn't that perfectly dreadful?"

"I should say it was," replied Bickers. "I hope the Society for the Pre-

vention of Cruelty to Animals got on his trail immediately."

THE SIREN

By Arthur Davison Ficke

So long ago, perhaps it was a dream!
Here in the silence where the slow tides stream
Time has no pulses, and the distant beat
Of waves makes dull the sound of the night's feet,
And life itself grows breathless, till it seems
A flow of night-wind shadows or gray dreams.

For him who stood that day beside the foam, Swift days and nights go by his woodland home And change the leaves and poppies and blue flowers I saw in that most sweet of all my hours— That hour that comes like blossoms seaward blown, Wreathing my forehead as I sit alone.

'Twas sunrise as I rose upon the waves,
Rose from the ancient silence of the caves,
And saw with wonder the low summer shore
Mine eyes had never looked upon before,
And saw the ripple on the shells that pave
The shores round which the blue, bright waters lave.

And then I saw him standing, facing me, Sit with the dawn-light of the sun and sea, Fair with the softness of the purple skies In the love-tender glory of his eyes. And I who had lured men to wreck-strewn seas At last grew faint with love's sharp ecstasies.

I knew him and I loved him; and the thrill Of sweet new passion made my singing still. Silent I raised toward him my yearning hands, My breast more white than flowers of summer lands. And in his eyes grew light like that which fills The whole wide glory of the summer hills.

72

I loved him and I called him . . . and he came! The light swayed dizzily; then sudden flame Flashed to his face a pale, awakening dread; He turned in deadly silent fear and fled; And I, struck through by some bewildering pain, Murmured love's sweetest sobbing words in vain.

The shore grew still; ebb-tide began to flow. The lilies seemed less splendidly to blow. Some step had passed there all too fleetingly And left the blue flowers withering by the sea, Battering their weary petals to and fro. . . I saw it all—so very long ago.



LITERARY ITEM

THE Ladies' Literary Club met yesterday afternoon at Mrs. Percy Robinson's.

Miss Gladys Pepperton told all she knew about the doings of the woman who has moved in next door to her and whose husband was away on business.

Mrs. Sanderson Somerset gave the inside history of the feud between the contralto and the parson.

Mrs. Sibyll Backus ripped up the back an old friend who hadn't treated her well.

Miss Flora Faberton announced three engagements and begged everyone not to mention it.

Mrs. Upperton Singster told of the last fight she had with her cook.

Mrs. Appleton Appleby brought a new baby gown which she is doing herself, and which was much admired.

Miss Sadie Saltpetre gave the inside history of how Mrs. Dumbleton's hus-

band had lost all his money in Wall Street.

Mrs. Stringer-Stringer's paper on the relation of Greek art to the Italian Renaissance was listened to with breathless interest. There was time to read only half of it, but the other half will undoubtedly be read next week.



DECIDEDLY

SPEAKING of the theatre of war—" began Bellingham, when Goldthorpe interrupted:
"That is the only theatre where back seats are desirable."

22

MRS. VON BLUMER—Why don't you take Peterkin out in your auto? VON BLUMER—Good heavens! Why, I'm trying to sell it to him.

THE ETERNAL DUEL

By James Huneker

HE face set him to strange wonderings; he sat at the coffin and watched it. His wife's face it was, and above the sorrow of the irrevocable parting floated the thought that she did not look happy as she lay in her bed of death. Monross had seen but two dead faces before; they were those of his father and mother. Both had worn upon the mask which death models an expression of relief. But this face, the face of his wife, the woman with whom he had lived-how many years!-he asked himself why he shuddered when he looked down at it, shuddered and also flushed with indignation. Had she been ever happy? How many times had she not voiced her feelings in the unequivocal language of love! Yet she seemed so hideously unhappy as she stretched before him in her white robes of death. Why? What secret was this disclosed at the twelfth hour of life, on the very brink of the grave? Did death, then, hold the solution to the enigma of the conquering Sphinx!

Monross, master of psychology, tormented by visions of perfection, a victim to the devouring illusion of the artist, Monross asked himself with chagrin if he had missed the key in which had sounded the symphony of this woman's life. This woman! His wife! A female creature, long-haired, smiling, loquacious—though reticent enough when her real self should have flashed out signals of recognition at him—this wife, the Rhoda he had called day and night—what had she been?

She had understood him, had realized his nobility of ideal, his gift, his occasional grandeur of soul-like all artistic men he was desultory in the manifestation of his talent; and had read aloud to him those poems written in the pitch-hot passion of his youth before he had met her. To her he had been always, so he told himself, a cavalier in his devotion. Without wealth, he had kept the soles of her little feet from touching the sidewalks of life. Upon her dainty person he had draped lovely garments. Why then, he wondered, the vindictive expression etched as if in aqua fortis upon her carved features?

Some old-world superstition held Monross captive as he gazed. Death is the grand revealer, he thought; death alone stamps upon the crumbling canvas of mortality the truth. Rhoda was dead. Yet her face was alive for the first time. He saw its truth; and again he shuddered, for he also discerned the hate that had lurked a life long in its devious and smiling expressions—expressions like a set of scenery pushed on and off as the order of the play demanded. Oh, the misery of it all! He, Monross, lover, poet, egoist, husband, to be confronted by this damnable defiance, this newly born hate! What had he done! And in the brain cells of the man there awakened a processional fleet of pictures: Rhoda wooed; Rhoda dazzled; Rhoda won; Rhoda smiling before the altar; Rhoda resigned at that other altar; Rhoda, wife, mother, and Rhoda -dead!

But Rhoda loved—again he looked at the face. The brow was virginally placid, the drooping, bitter mouth alone telling the unhappy husband a story he had never before suspected. Rhoda! Was it possible that this exquisite tiny creature had harbored rancor in her soul for the man who had adored her because she adored him? Rhoda! The shell of his egoism fell away from him. He saw the implacable resentment of this tender girl who, her married life long, had loathed the captain invading the citadel of her soul, the conqueror that had filched her virgin zone. The woman seemingly stared at the man through lids

closed in death—the woman, the sex that had ages ago feared the barbarian who dragged her to his cave, subdued her, made her bake his bread and bear his children.

In a wide heaven of surmise Monross read the confirmation—the eternal duel of the male and the female; saw that Rhoda had hated him most when most she trembled at his master bidding. And Rhoda lay dead in her lyre-shaped coffin, saying these ironic things to her husband when it was too late.



THE BRAVEST LOVER

HOW bravest that brave lover is
Who loves all things beneath the sun,
Then finds all women in just one,
And finds all fortunes in one kiss!
How wisely born, how more than wise,
How wisely learned must be that soul
Who loves all earth, all paradise,
All peoples, places, pole to pole,
Yet in one kiss includes the whole!

JOAQUIN MILLER.



A GREAT LOSS

THE NEW COOK—What time do you have breakfast?

MRS. HIGHBLOWER—At seven-thirty.

"Well, Oi'm sorry Oi can't be wid ye."



IT is not well for man to be alone—until he has been married long enough to appreciate solitude.

THE OTHER THING

By Virginia Woodward Cloud

AHA! A fire is good! 'Twere not a bad idea this, to elude our excellent Dorminorf and ride ahead for a breathing spell. They think me at Bleint ere this. Send everyone away, Germaine! Who needs a swarm of lackeys in the heart of the woods? And why are you here, boy?"

not to the beneat the only

Prince Krauntz of Bleint stretched his feet to the flames and looked up at a pale, dark-haired youth who stood in the chimney-corner beside him.

"That your highness should find congenial society awaiting you, did you please to stop here tonight pour prendre congè."

"Screaming devils! Throw a log on and shut the door! So you deem yourself congenial society, Sir Scribe? Do you not know that my grandfather—honor to his majesty—would have kept you as fool because of your tongue?"

"Twere the same thing, your highness. Were it not for fools, would kings appear wise?"

"Death and darkness, hear him!"
"In good time, your highness, but—

toujours après mon prince!"

Krauntz of Bleint threw his head back, and the candlelight leaped to illumine his blond curls as he laughed aloud.

"Germaine, you are an impertinent brat, an incorrigible bookworm, the son of a thousand years and"—the eyes of the other suddenly met his own, and those of the boy were adoring in their fervor—"a shield; boy! Your hand! You would have taken the bullet that was meant for me, when

that which we call fate threw you before me."

"In return, my dear master, you have given me a home and books. I kiss your hand! We are quits."

"Bah!" The prince ran his fingers lightly through the dark hair that was now bowed at his knee. "I spoil you sadly, Germaine, but that were a poor return for your loyalty and faith, the most needful traits in a friend and retainer."

"And which a prince requires most of all on his last free night," said the youth.

"Pest! What do you mean, boy?"
"An old rhyme, your highness—
"He who weds where no love is,

Slavery and bondage his."
"Germaine, you presume!" A
black line drew Prince Krauntz's brow

quickly.

"Love never presumes, your highness. Have you not shown me as much about tomorrow's betrothal?"

The prince folded his arms and looked into the fire, speaking toler-

"Enough, Germaine! You get romantic notions from too much reading. You know nothing of the world—"

"Through playing with it, your highness!"

"-or of marriage-"

"Through trying it, your highness!"

"-or of love-"

"Through—receiving it, my prince."
"Therefore you are not qualified to judge. But you are my friend, boy—my tried friend. I suppose that all is satisfactorily arranged for tomorrow? I have given no attention to the de-

tails. It is quite enough that Dorminorf is utilizing every resource of the world, the flesh and the devil, and at this moment the flower of the regular army is employed in smashing beer mugs in Bleint to the tune of 'Long live the royal pair!' I suppose her highness, Princess Valma, has arrived and is veiled with that mysterious seclusion which surrounds the bride-tobe."

Krauntz spoke half whimsically, but the youth looking down upon him replied with a certain gravity, as of

predetermined intention.

"It is said that the princess will precede your highness, but will not be seen until the time of the royal betrothal and coronation. Even here, in the forest, we have wind of what is taking place at Bleint. 'Tis said that the town is a carnival indeed."

"Ah? Well, such things must be, I suppose." The prince appeared to brood for awhile. "I am more of a soldier than a princeling, Germaine;

is it not so?"

"Your highness is both! Sir, it is the soldier and one other who best learn life's greatest lessons—obedience and mastery."

"Ha! Mastery? A soldier?" said

Krauntz quickly.

"Surely, your highness, when his blood is flame, his courage dauntless, his will of iron, and his eye an arrow!"

The prince smiled tolerantly.

"So! You deem me all of that, Germaine?"

"Yes, your highness."

"That, then, is the soldier, and who shares his province?" said Krauntz.

"The lover, sir."

"Oho! Well, Sir Scholar, the soldier has sufficed for me so far!"

"Nay, your highness, that is because you have never loved!" said the boy gently.

"Thunder and brimstone! 'Tis well I'm in a mellow mood tonight!" laughed the prince.

"Else it were my last also?" said Germaine significantly.

Prince Krauntz kicked a log and it

fell apart with noisy sparks flying up. He frowned.

"Enough! I wish to hear no more of the marriage tonight! Why harp on it? What matters one State alliance more or less? I was not born to a bed of down, boy, and fate has not fed me on rose leaves! The three furies strewed no balm at my christening, but no doubt bore a good godmother's part, from our portion of war and bloodshed which followed!" He sighed, and clasped his hands behind his head with a youthful gesture. "Tis well then that I have had time to lean upon the softer side of life, for now I need not forswear it! Now, what is this?"

The other had suddenly kneeled beside the prince's chair, his dark, intense eyes eagerly scanning his master's

"Your highness, my dear master! Oh, I must speak tonight—it is the last time! Forget that I would indeed have been but fool to your grandfather and remember that once you called me Little Brother!" lips brushed the prince's hand and his eyes were limpid with feeling and

Krauntz smiled a little and folded his arms, falling into the other's

mood.

"Well, well, little brother, what is it now? A mare's nest in the forest, or a war in the kennels? An ode perhaps on the approaching nuptials, which Dorminorf will give to the prettiest maiden to deliver with pink

roses and blushes?"

"No, no, dear sir! I want to say to you that there is a side of life which you have not tried—that softer side, the part that is not of bone and sinew, but of the heart and soul! Ah, dear sir, I wish to beg you not to forget, not to ignore its promptings! Even I, who have sped before you in thought, knowing your will before it was uttered, a mere carrier-pigeon which, send it where you will, flies back to you—even I have learned this thing: that we may ignore it, turn from it, blind ourselves to its appealing, but come it will in its own time. And its coming may be pain!"

Krauntz did not speak; his keen eyes were bent upon the boy half

humorously.

"And again, your highness, this also have I learned, that freedom is the very breath of your life. Do you not return to this quiet castle in the woods only to breathe the air of freedom and cast aside all subservience to form which is expected of you?"

"Aye, boy, true!" said Krauntz ab-

And, sir, forgive me, but I have learned that your highness can be subservient to but two masters."

"Two masters! And they, Ger-

maine?"

"Duty and love, sir."

"You speak as you have learned—from books, boy!"

"No, from truth, your highness! Sir, do I not know that your hand can be as tender as a woman's, while your heart, so carefully hidden, would turn bitter and hard did you love once and were that love repelled?"

"Come to it, Germaine! I think I commence to see your trail!" Krauntz laughed abruptly. "You are skilful! You try to tell me that the Princess Valma, who does not love me, not having seen me, will hate me when

she does see me, eh?"

"Not hate you, your highness, but -forgive me-rumor says the princess is sadly averse to this marriage, and is accepting it as the political obligation which must be faced by you both. The princess is opposed to marriage without love."

"Rumor should beware!" Krauntz broke suddenly upon the boy's breath-

"True, sir; but oh, your highness, if the princess is as proud as rumor implies, if she is of such strong spirit and has forced herself to face this marriage, she may-she may-"

stopped.
"Press prejudice to the point of Well, let it be so. Better an acknowledgment of our

positions. And now-"

"No, your highness! I pray you, hear me! If the marriage had been of her own seeking, if she were only like others of her rank! But she -the Princess Valma is said to be gifted, also. She is a believer in romance, I should say, and I fear that she-that you will be most unhappy -whereas-" The boy stopped, as one who fears to tread farther in the

"Well, if it be only my unhappiness that exercises you, Germaine, let it be! I have no time to dawdle at the feet of Dame Happiness. She is a capricious jade whose acquaintance I have never sought, therefore she will not seek me. This marriage is a mere contract, boy, a form! Think no more about it. Your days are spent in the pursuit of happiness; mine is a harder chase!" Krauntz flung his arms outward, yawning, and his blue eyes laughed daringly upward to the grave dark ones of the youth who watched him. "His Grace of Fuerstburg is fuming after me at a red-hot pace, and the Princess Valma's suite is speeding to Bleint to wish me joy of tomorrow. Meanwhile, I am comfortably hiding in the woods and wish them joy of tonight! Tomorrow may look to itself, Germaine; I should like to live tonight! It was a taste of your so-called happiness to ride through the pines at dusk! Their breath was wine to my veins, boy! Happiness? A fable of the gods, little brother, unless it be found in the heart of these woods. Jove, were it a few hours earlier I vow I should go hunting. I would be in the saddle now!"

He sprang up, the firelight leaping to his broad shoulders and high white

"I am apter with powder and shot than in knowledge of women, Germaine, and perhaps that is the reason I am not afraid to marry one I have never seen. No doubt she is not different from any other."

"Ah, sir, but she is! I mean, your highness, the Princess Valma is said

to be most beautiful."

"Not so, Germaine. I fancy her

exceeding plain, for she refused the ambassador her picture—which a pretty woman never does! But how have you and Rumor grown to be such

gossips here in solitude?"

"Rumor is but the wind of speech. your highness. It penetrates everywhere. It says that the princess is independent, liberal of thought and something of a poet."

"A poet! Powers that be-a poet!" "Yes, your highness, and disap-proves of marriage without love and—

and has never loved, sir."

"A poet, a prude and a princess! The devil!" Krauntz laid his hand kindly upon the boy's shoulder. "Come, come! You call this my last free night, therefore let us spend it well before I grow sleepier."

Suddenly the youth's eyes were alive with eagerness, as of one who makes his last throw, and chances madly.

"Yes, yes, your highness! Let us go out together. We shall have a last chance to do the Other Thing!" Prince Krauntz laughed now.

"And what may the Other Thing be? By my soul, Germaine, you are more diversion than even a skirmish with

Dorminorf!"

"Sir, let us put on our forester dress, in which your highness once hunted. I with a rifle and you with your gamebag shall go out into the night and follow the forest path and do the thing which most we want to do-and not

the thing we must!"

"Oho, is that all? Then may heaven send us a monster bear! But let me be well disguised, boy, for remember, I am speeding along the road to Bleint in hot haste to meet the Court and accompanied by his grace, Dorminorf and suite. Your Dame Rumor must not meet Krauntz of Bleint, carousing in the woods on his betrothal eve!"

"Then, your highness, I shall take off that beard. It hides your face and I

do not like it!"

"Zounds! What would her highness say did I appear tomorrow without the mark which distinguishes me in my pictures? No, no, not the beard, boy!"

"Yes, yes, dear master! Do you not see that it were all the better to surprise her, when one aspect has been that of the duty in store for her? You will present a different appearance. That scores one point in advance."

Krauntz laughed aloud now. "Germaine, you have the devil's wit! Off with the beard! But see that 'tis well done. Remember, we must not meet Rumor in our own guise, for if the Princess Valma questions the propriety of a soldier's life such as mine, what opinion would she

have of a roving forester?"

. II

An hour later the two emerged from the great black shadow of the castle and skirted along the wall of the court, now white in the moonlight. They took a hill path which lay at the edge of the forest stretching for many miles behind the castle and swung along together, the prince metamorphosed now by his smooth face, his forester blouse, cap and leather leggings. His was a strong, bold figure, and as he went he bared his head to the stars, and his trained eve swept the expanse of field and wood, serene beneath the Milky Way, which seemed a white reflection of the path beneath.

Now and then the youth stole an anxious glance at his master's face, but did not speak until Krauntz

"What did you mean, Germaine, by the Other Thing?"

They took the hill road slowly now, as the boy spoke:

"It has impressed me in this way, your highness. Every character, in a measure, controls the orbit in which it moves-

"Ho, philosopher!"

"Hear me, your highness! At some moment, when you were forced to your duty have you not had a quick impulse to do the other thing and observe how far it would disarrange the circumstances dependent upon your action? Suppose you had followed impulse rather than law, what would have resulted?"

"True! I remember one night; but that was absurd—" began the

prince.

"Tell me, I beg, your highness!" "Well, the ambassador dined with us to discuss a certain treaty about which we disagreed; of course I understood that ultimately I should be forced to sign it. Circumstances were too difficult, but I wished my premise to be understood. A troop of strollers played their violins outside the palace windows in passing-a wild waltz, I think-and I suddenly saw myself making excuses to the ambassador, slipping away to join the vagabonds, strolling with them into the night, faring with them the next day at some far tavern, lying with them in the woods for a noonday nap, earning and eating a crust with them, and laughing up through green branches to congratulate Krauntz of Bleint that he had escaped the treaty, had kept his birthright of truth, and that the world was still rolling on and the sun still shining! But, pest! There I sat, opposite the ambassador, who fancied me lost in thought-and the strollers passed, while I counted the bubbles in my wineglass."

Germaine tossed his cap and caught it, smiling upward to the stars.

"Why did you not do it, your highness? It was the Other Thing!"

"Simpleton! That is what princes may not do. They must follow the law."

"Yet, your highness, we are doing the Other Thing now. You are a rollicking forester and I a lad bearing you company. We are drinking the draught of freedom. We will do that which first appeals to us. Only forget you are a prince, sir, for 'tis hard for others to forget it."

The prince sighed.

"I forget how sweet a breath Mother Earth has until I return to her. See, a light yonder in the forest!"

"Perhaps it is our first opportunity," said the youth; "we shall not

ignore it." They went into the woods path and followed the light that shone from a cottage set among pines, and the boy stepped softly to a window through which came waveringly the orange glow of a fire. A voice was singing, the sound softened by the walls between them. He returned and drew the prince forward.

"This way, your highness!" he said.
"Do not forget that tonight belongs

to the Other Thing!"

Prince Krauntz peeped between the

short white curtains.

"My faith!" he muttered, and drew back, but the boy did not move. Presently the prince looked again. A young woman sat before the fire, her profile turned to the window; a book was in her lap and her hands were clasped upon it. She had stopped singing to speak to an old woman sitting opposite knitting.

ting opposite knitting.
The boy whispered: "She stays here with old Nanna, the blind knitter, sir. I came to read to old Nanna a day ago, and—she was here." The prince still did not move; then he drew a breath and whispered scarcely above it:

"She is beautiful!"

The girl raised her arms, smiling, and they heard her say:

"Maman, I am sleepy."

She took the shell pins from her hair and it rolled about her, gleaming yellow in the firelight; the sleeves fell back from her white arms and her throat rose slender and firm from her kerchief. Her head and face were flowerlike in their delicate grace and beauty.

"Shall we go in and ask cider from Nanna?" said the boy. "It will only

please her."

The prince drew back with a new timidity.

"No, no! It might — the other might consider it an intrusion."

"Your highness, it is but a forest cabin where others stop, and we are following the Other Thing. Old Nanna knows me only as a forester lad; you shall enter as my friend. Come!"

The prince was drawn to the cabin door, and the boy rapped. There was an instant's silence, followed by an exclamation; then the old woman opened the door and the boy accosted

her with neighborliness.

"I am he who comes to read to you, mother, and I bring a friend. We are going through the forest tonight, and I have told him of your cider, which is the best in these parts, aye, better than any elsewhere. Your servant, lady!"

This, to the girl, who did not rise, but quietly twisted her hair up. Its tendrils lay on her white throat, however, and her face was flushed like the heart of a rose. She raised her eyes and met the strong gaze of the prince who stood against the door, a tall, stalwart figure, and her own was held by it. The old woman started toward the shed door beyond, exclaiming that they should have cider at once, but the girl put her back gently.

"No, maman! I shall draw it!"

she said.

"I beg you, permit me to draw it for you, madam!" spoke Prince

Krauntz quickly.

"It is not necessary," the girl replied, as she fetched a jug from the dresser, but he followed and took it from her. Her head raised as in displeasure, and she stepped back, then stood, drawn by his eager look, and smiled. "You are bold! The cider is yonder, in the outer shed."

"But I do not know where the shed is," said the prince masterfully.

She went forward and raised the latch, motioning him to go in, but he stepped aside and waited. As though instinct moved her she passed first into the outer shed, the door swinging to after them. The boy who stood now behind old Nanna's chair sent a deep, pensive look after them. At last he said:

"She is not your daughter, mother?"
"There was never daughter, young sir, as dear as she," replied the old

"She does not live here with you always, then?"

"I have not lived here always myself," said the old woman.

"She is very beautiful, mother."

"Aye, sir, even my poor finger-tips tell me that!" The old woman suddenly raised her sightless eyes appealingly. "Young master, your voice speaks of truth. I pray you picture her to me as she looks tonight. Tonight," she added softly.

The boy looked dreamily into the

nre.

"I have seen her before. She goes to the great pines where the spring is, alone."

"But tonight?" repeated the old

woman.

"Ah, tonight she is different, mother! Tonight she is crowned with a seriousness that sets her apart—that makes her one to be worshiped."

"Aye! But her hair, her hair, young

master?"

"Of the sun's weaving, mother."

"And her face, sir?"

"Her face? Her eyes—her lips—Ah, I cannot!" Suddenly he threw his hand to his face. "She is very fair, mother," he said simply.

The old woman's needles clicked.

"Ah, the good child!" she murmured to herself, "always the good

child!"

The shed door swung back with a breath of night air and the prince entered, carrying the jug of cider. The young woman advanced with a grave stateliness which seemed her birthright and laid a detaining hand on the arm of old Nanna, who started to rise.

"No, maman, not tonight!" she said. Then she took two mugs from the dresser and placed them on the table before resuming her seat near the fire. Every movement was so full of gentle grace that the prince watched her absorbingly, forgetful that he still held the jug, from which he spilled some of the cider. She bade them help themselves, and her voice was not the least lovely part of her. The boy took his mug, saying:

"Pardon my friend's clumsiness. He is good at soldiering or shooting and is something of a scholar, too, but knows little of serving ladies! Permit me—" He bent his knee and proffered the mug with so adoring an up-

ward look that she smiled a little, but shook her head.

"I do not drink it."

The prince, however, held his high and his eyes were upon her.

"To the beauty of the woods!" he said. But as she did not raise her eyes the youth said quickly:

"A fitting toast! The woods are

always beautiful!"

They drank and the prince took a stool before the fire and spoke to the blind knitter, while the boy curled cross-legged at her feet upon a bearskin.

Presently the prince addressed the

girl respectfully.

"Have you dwelt long in the forest?"
"Longer than yourself," she answered.

"Then you do not deem me forest bred?"

She shook her head.

"There is little of the real woodsman about you. More of the soldier, I should say."

"Right! But I am of the forest,

too," said the prince.

"I love the forest," she breathed.

"You waste love upon the trees?" He spoke whimsically. "True, I know little of love, but 'tis said some folks crave it."

"Love is never wasted. Like water from a spring it returns to nourish its original source," she made answer im-

pulsively.

"Tell me! Tell me more!" Krauntz leaned forward eagerly, dominatingly as was his wont, with the fire of youthful impetuosity that was a part of his

mastery.

Quite unconsciously her eyes responded to the sincerity of his own, perhaps to read his nature, which held truth uppermost, or perhaps, she thought, "He will go his way tonight—why not?" At any rate, she spoke fearlessly, and with a fervor that was consistent with the illumined beauty of her face.

"Love is our one spark of the divine; it is the soul of all our parts. The body does not love without the soul, nor yet the soul without the body."

The prince's face rested on his hand, as he leaned forward listening, eagerly scanning her eyes, but they were on the fire. "Go on—tell me!" he murmured.

"Even as the moon controls the tide, we know not how, love controls our being and holds us in sway. It were far better that we touch the farthest bond of life without love than to accept its semblance, for that teaches only regret without the dignity of loss." The prince drew back and looked at her in wonder.

"You have learned much, much,"

he said.

She took her book up again, as in rebuke and he looked abashed, boyish; that she was a lady, and fearless, was evident, yet that she was living in the forest with the old blind knitter was manifest.

The youth lay and gazed in the fire, only a glance now and then through his lashes betraying that he was conscious of their presence. The old woman's knitting lay in her lap, her chin on her breast as she slept. A close silence seemed weaving its spell around them, a silence charged with strange currents as oppressive, as strong, as vast as the forest beyond and as unconquerable. Full of mystery and suggestiveness it grew more impossible to break with every second, yet it illumined time with a significance too rare to ignore. It held the drum-beat of the heart, the signal of the senses; it wrapped them in tense solitude, silent vet soundful.

Suddenly she moved as with determination to compel the prince to remove his gaze from her, and her book slipped downward. He stooped to take it up, and as his hand unwittingly touched hers she started to rise, wonder outpressyring the pride in her face.

der outmeasuring the pride in her face.

"Do not go! Do not!" he murmured. "I will go—if you will"—the youth at Nanna's feet suddenly curled himself upon the skin and lay with his face upon his arm, his dark lashes sweeping downward—"permit him to sleep for a few moments. Then I will go, for tomorrow"—the word arrested her and suddenly her eyes met his with

a strange gleam in them; it was as if fear started to life for the first time. but the earnestness of his face demanded understanding from her-"tomorrow, madam, I have a duty to perform, but tonight I am free. I fear that I am a blunt man, and know little about women. Awhile ago I did not know that you lived, yet in this little space you have shown me what I did not dream of learning-of womanhood and life's possibilities, of which I have only touched the brim, and have not drunk. Now, I beg you, talk to me in this quieter moment as no woman ever has-my mother died when I was born. Tell me, oh, tell me what you will, but talk to me as only a woman -as only you can, that I may carry the memory with me when I go.

Her clear eyes understood him. "It is strange that I should sit here and talk with one of whose name and rank I am ignorant," she began. "No! I do not wish to know them. better so. We are wayfarers for a night in the forest, and shall go our

separate paths hereafter."

It was indeed a strange manner in which to be found in a woodsman's cabin. but the prince was in no mood to question it. They talked murmuringly together, as equal to equal, because of that equality of mind which levels all ranks. Her words, lighting upon the flower of his speech like luminous butterflies, made beauty where they touched. He listened as one who was drawn for a brief delicious moment into another sphere where the shackles of habit fall away. He had known little of women whose sympathy could meet his own in quick responsiveness, and whose comprehension was too true to be timorous. Beneath her voice his own confidence unfolded to the heart without fear of misconcep-

By and bye the boy uncurled himself

and yawned.
"Come, brother, come! Tomorrow will be here soon!" he said.

"Tomorrow!" muttered the prince. It was as a chilling breath, and the girl arose looking startled, her head held high, her face pale in the candlelight, and stood. It was dismissal. Old Nanna did not awaken, but the boy went to the door and lifted the latch.

"Come!" he said; and the young woman stood in silence as the prince

bowed and left her.

Outside the cabin Krauntz of Bleint stood bareheaded gazing beyond him, and as the boy touched his arm he turned, and his eyes were the eyes of a dreamer.

"I love her," he said, as one repeats

a creed. "I love her."

"Sir, go back and tell her so!" said

the youth.

The prince passed his hand across his brow. "Madness!" he muttered. "Sheer madness! And tonight of all nights! Tomorrow-"

"Tomorrow you will only be the prince, tonight you are the man, and

after to-tomorrow-

"I shall be king," said Krauntz, wheeling about. "You are right, boy! I will not leave her falsely. Whoever she may be, there is none like her. I will tell her!"

The boy sped back to the cabin

door and tapped lightly.

"Madam!" he called softly, "madam!" She came out almost as one who expected a summons, and stood before the prince in the moonlight. Behind them was the darkness of the forest and mystery, above them the eternal truth of the stars. The boy drew away but could not avoid hearing his master, who spoke clearly, as he stood before her, his cap held upward.

"Madam, I ask you to hear me, for, as I told you, I am but a blunt man. I am no stroller, madam, but I am Krauntz of Bleint." At this she grew so white even in the moonlight that he threw his hand out and caught hers which was flung upward as in

"Wait, madam! It is true that I am the Prince of Bleint, but tonight I am only the man, Krauntz, and, as God hears me, I would this forest were my home if it be yours! Only a miracle wrought by one such as you could bring to pass that which has befallen me, for in this hour you have taught me what love is, and although tomorrow I shall be bound to another, no power of Church or State can hold me from telling you that to this mem-

ory my soul will be faithful!"

He paused, more because arrested by the swift beauty in her uplifted eves which had held a momentary gleam of fear or apprehension. Now, they scanned his to the soul, but there was soft radiance behind their pride. Then they fell beneath his own

"Madam, I shall never inquire your name, but shall hold this memory of you as my life's sweetest hour!"

She bowed her head. "I thank your highness for this confidence. It

shall be sacred. Now go!"

She added the words as though afraid that her voice might reveal a certain underlying tenderness which throbbed through it, and suddenly the lover in him broke bounds.

"Look at me!" he said masterfully, and their eyes strove together through the white night. "God's grace, you love me!" he muttered. Then for an instant he seized her hands and pressed them to his lips. She broke from him and fled into the cabin, and the door closed. Prince Krauntz turned harshly upon the boy who came to his side.

"Why did you bring me here? did you bring me here too late?"

But the boy drew him forward and pointed to where the castle broke black between the stars on the hill-

"Your highness, our way lies yon-

der now."

The prince strode off in the darkness, but the boy stooped and plucked a tuft of grass which her feet had pressed and thrust it in his bosom.

III

THEY walked hard up the hill to the field path, it seeming but the prince's bodily presence which pressed against the night, for his soul was speeding back on flaming wings to where he had left her.

Suddenly the castle gleamed forth in points of fire. Lights were moving here and there, as they entered the courtyard, and hounds were baying. Voices shouted and horses stamped and neighed at the entrance, while questions flew through the air like the wings of invisible birds.

"Where is his highness? The Duke of Fuerstburg has arrived? Where is

the prince?"

A lackey ran forward with a light and stumbled over the prince, whose smooth face and woodsman's dress disguised him.

Ho, fellow!" cried the lackey. "What are you doing here? Get out

of here!"

The prince caught him and flung him over the wall. His was the mood which has won empires.

He strode into the castle where attendants with lights were wondering over the absence of the prince, and one

of them accosted him:

"How dare you enter here, fellow! Out with you!" The prince hurled him away and the others fell back terrified and amazed as they recognized

who it was.

He went to his own apartments, and the boy closed the doors behind them. The prince strode back and forth, his face burning, his eyes aflame; one moment he was exalted, the next submerged in gloom. Suddenly, with a groan, he flung himself upon a divan, his head dropping in his hands. "What fiend possessed you to lead me there tonight, Germaine? Why should I now, now, learn the curse of loving?"

"And your sweetest hour, your highness?" said the boy.

True, true," muttered the prince. Then in the silence the tower clock struck twelve.

"Your highness," said Germaine, "it is tomorrow, and his grace awaits

you in the antechamber.'

Krauntz of Bleint arose and tossed the hair from his brow, and in spite of the woodsman's dress all trace of the forester disappeared.

"Say to His Grace of Fuerstburg that

we will see him!" he said.

When the door was opened and the duke announced, the prince stood before the fire, his hands behind his back, his eyes cast down. The duke veiled the surprise which his highness's appearance caused him, and started a little when the prince raised his eyes; they were the eyes of a man who had at last learned his lesson.

"Your highness! I crave your leniency! It was a most unfortunate misunderstanding that your highness should have proceeded thus far unattended! My place is by your highness's side through every moment of this auspicious day! I cannot conceive of such negligence on the part of-of-in fact, were your highness not invariably punctual, I should say that you had started an hour in advance-

"Enough, enough, my good Dorminorf! You are so accurate a timepiece that I have ceased to rely upon myself in that respect, hence the mistake. It is of no consequence and we

will forget it!"

"Ah, your highness! Your magnanimity recalls that of your beloved father-God rest his majesty! But I am desolated that on the eve of your betrothal your highness should have found those upon whom you rely lacking in-" The old man's sharp eyes were perplexedly scanning the prince's forester dress, and his bushy brows drew together.

To the point, Dorminorf; I am

sleepy," said the prince.

"There is a most important subject to which I must entreat your highness's attention! I, alone, was authorized by your highness to direct the court chamberlain in all matters pertaining to the solemnity of the royal nuptials and coronation, and am most disturbed to discover that he presumes to disagree in so momentous a matter as the number of pine cones surmounting the coronets. Your highness, as a baron I should wear six, but as the representative of a duchy I refuse to appear in less than eight!"

"Right, Dorminorf! I rely upon judgment. Ten cones!

"No, no, your highness! Eight, I beg to correct! Eight-

Eight or eighteen, Dorminorf! And now-

"One moment more, your highness! I was much displeased—the word is not too strong-to discover that her highness, the Princess Valma, refused to appear until tomorrow. I am assured, however, that in spite of her extreme exclusiveness the princess has conceded to all other conditions."

"Ah?"

The prince was surely not attending. He was looking dreamily over the head of the Duke of Fuerstburg, whose

brows grew bushy again.

"I beg your highness to attend to this matter for a moment. I hope that which I have to impart may not disturb your highness. It would seem that the Princess Valma is-er-somewhat whimsical. She possesses a most bourgeois devotion to nature, which in her childhood she had been unfortunately permitted to indulge. I mean nature-the woods-er-and mountains and her gardens and lands. In fact, her highness keeps a solitary mountain cabin in the forest to which she habitually resorts, unattended saving by her foster-mother, a worthy enough old person, that she may the better pursue that which she is pleased to designate as her literary art. Fancy, your highness"—the old man coughed apologetically-"a most extraordinary taste to develop in a princess of so old a house! It appears that the reason for her non-appearance as yet in Bleint is that the princess has stipulated to spend the last few days alone in the forest with this old woman, a blind knitter, I think she is called-

"Ha!" Like the flashing of light upon a blade the prince's eyes suddenly darted into those of His Grace of

Fuerstburg.

"Oh, I beg your highness to believe that it is merely girlish caprice which can be modified and molded into shape by your highness after awhile. Withhold your judgment as yet, and try to realize that in one so independently situated as the Princess Valma, and so young, there might have been"-his grace coughed again-"other traits more objectionable. This, I am sure, is a mere childish whim, easily overcome in one so young and-er-charming. highness may be-er-slightly eccentric, but her beauty is unquestionable!"

Krauntz of Bleint was breathing quickly, and there seemed some rigid constraint set upon him, as his voice

escaped:

"She is in the forest, Dorminorf?

This forest, you say?"

"Surely, your highness. A mere freak, I assure you! I also desire to consult your highness concerning-"

"I thank you, Dorminorf, but it is We will resume tomorrow. "Then I beg leave to retire, sir."

The old duke bowed. The prince returned the salute, but when the door had closed he did not raise his head, and his voice shook. "Germaine, speak!" he said.

"Sir, it is she," said the boy, pale

now to the lips.

"And you knew it?" "I knew it, my prince!"

The prince threw his head up and his eyes struck upon the boy with stern mastery.

"And she? Did she know me tonight, before I told her my name?

Speak!"

"No, your highness! On my faith, no!" said the boy. Krauntz of Bleint looked as though a light had suddenly

illumined him.

"God be praised!" he said, as one would who drinks after famine of a life-giving draught. He strode to the window and flung the curtains back, to breathe in the starlit air, and the boy followed him.

Oh, sir, are you angry?" he whis-

pered. But the prince was murmuring to himself, "Today!—I shall see

her today!"

"Your highness, let me explain. I saw her from the tower window, where my telescope is. Then I went to read to old Nanna and there was a book, and a cushion with a coronet on it. I knew that it was she, oh, from many things! Can one fail to see that she is royal? She has no fear! She talked to me-she thought me only-only a forester lad. Ah, sir, I could not help it! You are not angry?"

The prince wheeled about unhearing. "Germaine! She did not shrink from me when she learned my name? She started, I remember-even now she may be affronted—displeased!"

"No, your highness! It was then that her eyes spoke to you. Sir, she loves you."

The prince threw his arm across the

shoulders of the other.

"It is a miracle, this love!" he murmured, and the boy's lips touched his hand.

"You have found happiness, dear

master," he said.

Krauntz of Bleint threw himself upon the divan, an arm across his eyes, and mused, and the boy lay down upon the fur before the fire and gazed into the flames. Presently the prince opened his eyes and smiled tolerantly, as one smiles who is the possessor of a secret.

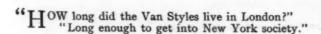
"Little brother, you thought that you could learn of love shut up here in your tower with your books! What

do you know of love?"

"Nothing, your highness, through receiving it," said the other. The prince closed his eyes and the tower clock struck one as he slept.

The boy before the fire drew a tuft of grass from his bosom and lay with

his lips pressed upon it.



THE FOOLISH FOLK

BETWEEN Life's gates of mystery
Throng solemn men and wise,
With scales to weigh the things that be,
To sift, reject and prize;
Long bowed beneath their wisdom's yoke
They ponder as is meet;
But we, we be the foolish folk
Who know the world is sweet.

Scholar and sage and fearful priest
They trudge a dismal quest,
And marvel if the great be least
Or if the least be best;
Weighs each the worth of prince or hind
'Neath cowl and cap and hood;
But we, we be the foolish kind
Who know the world is good.

Within the dust of yesterdays
Their gaunt hands dip and stir;
They ponder on tomorrow's ways
And guess, distrust, aver;
Yesterday's fault, tomorrow's sin
Their withered lips repeat;
But we, we be the foolish kin
Who know today is sweet.

Oh, wise men of the sombre heart,
We be of little worth,
Who play our useless games apart
And take our joy of earth;
God's mirth when this His world awoke
Ye have not understood—
We only heard, we foolish folk
Who know that life is good.

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



UNDISSIPATED DISSIPATION

HAD no idea, until I tried to collect a bill from him lately, that Sharp-more had dissipated his patrimony."
"Why, what on?"

"Matrimony. Everything's in his wife's name."

BROWN

By Arthur Train

ARRY might have stopped!" thought Brown, as a stalwart young man strode briskly past with a short "Good evening." "I've not had a chance to speak to him for a month." He hesitated as if doubtful whether or not to follow and overtake the other, then turned in his original direction. His delight in the scene about him was too exquisite to be interrupted even for a talk with his friend. Dusk was just falling. For an instant a purple glow lingered upon the spires of the beautiful gray cathedral, whose chimes were softly echoing above the murmur of the city; then the light slipped upward and upward, until, touching the topmost point, it vanished into the darkening blue.

All about him jingled the sleigh-bells; long lines of equipages carrying gorgeously dressed women moved in continuous streams in each direction; hundreds of lamps began to gleam in the windows and along the Avenue; a kaleidoscopic electric sign, changing momentarily, flashed parti-colored showers of light across the house-tops; big automobiles, full of jolly parties of men and women in enormous fur coats and grotesque visors, buzzed and hissed along; newsboys shrilly called their items; warm, humid breaths of fragrance rolled out from the florists' shops; smells of confections, of sachet, of gasoline, of soft-coal smoke, together with that of roses and damp fur, hung on the keen air.

The greatest pleasure in Brown's life, next to his friendship for Harry Rogers, was his continuously fresh wonder at and appreciation for the

complex, brilliant, palpitating life of the great city in which he, the taciturn New Englander, had come to live. The richness of his present experience glowed against the sombre background of his past, touching emotions hitherdormant and unrecognized. He realized as yet only the mysterious charm, the overwhelming attraction of his new surroundings; and every sense, dwarfed by inheritance, chilled by the east wind, throbbed and tingled in response. So far as Brown knew happiness this was its consummation; and it was all due to Rogers. As Brown wandered along the crowded thoroughfare his mind dwelt fondly upon his friend. He recalled their chance introduction two years before at Colonial Club in Cambridge, through Harry's friend Winthrop, and how his heart had instantly gone out to the courteous and responsive stranger. That meeting had been the first shimmer of light through the musty chrysalis of Brown's existence.

Shortly afterward he had given up his place in the English department at Harvard at the suggestion of one of the faculty and accepted a position at Columbia. The professor had hinted that he was too good a man to wait for the slow promotion incident to a scholastic career at Harvard, and had mentioned New York as offering immeasurably greater opportunities. The advice had appealed to Brown and he had acted upon it.

He remembered how lonely he had been the first few weeks after his arrival. In that hot and sultry September the city had seemed a prison. He had longed for the green elms, the hazy downs, the earthy dampness of his solitary evening walks. One broiling day he had encountered Rogers on the Elevated railroad. The latter had not recognized him at first, but presently had recalled their first meeting.

Brown in his enthusiasm had spoken familiarly of Winthrop, explaining in detail his own departure from Cambridge and his plans for the future. He was nevertheless rather surprised to receive within a week a note from Mrs. Rogers inviting him to spend a Sunday with them at their country place. What that had meant to him!

At college he had taken high rank and was graduated at the top of his class, but he had made no friends. He would have given ten years of his life for a single companion to throw an arm around his shoulder and call him by his Christian name. He had never been "old man" to anybody-only Mr. Brown. At night when he had heard the clinking of glasses and the bursts of laughter in the adjoining rooms as he sat by his kerosene lamp reading Milton, or Bacon or "The Idio-Psychological Theory of Ethics," he would sometimes drop his books, turn out the light and creep into the hall, listening to what he could not share. Then with the tears burning in his eves he would stumble back to his lonely room and to bed.

When he had achieved the ambition of his college days and by heartbreaking and unremitted drudgery had secured a position upon the faculty, he had found his relations still unchanged. His shell had hardened. From Mr. Brown he had become merely "Old

Brown."

And then how easily he had stepped into this other life! The Rogerses had received him with open arms; their house had become the only real home he had ever known; and his affection for his new friends had blossomed for him almost into a romance. Even when Harry was busy or away Brown would drop in on Mrs. Rogers of an evening and read aloud to her from his favorite authors. He tried to guide her reading and sent her books, and

little Jack he loved with all his heart.

The friendship, beginning thus auspiciously, continued for many months. Rogers put him up at the club and introduced him to his friends, so that Brown slipped into a delightful circle of acquaintances, and found his horizon broadening unexpectedly. Life assumed an entirely fresh significance, and although, by reason of a constitutional bluntness of perception, he failed utterly to discriminate between superficial politeness on the part of others and genuine interest, the world in which he was now living seemed to overflow with the milk of human kindness.

Brown had been making afternoon calls. The friendly cup of tea was to him a delightful innovation, and he cultivated it assiduously. He paused in front of a large corner house and hopefully ascended the steps.

"Not at 'ome," intoned the butler

in response to his inquiry.

He turned down a side street, but no better success awaited him. He had found no one "at home" that afternoon. Usually he had better luck. But it was getting late and almost time to dress for dinner, and, although Brown usually dined alone, he had become very particular about dressing for his evening meal. His heart was bursting with good nature as he sauntered along in the brisk evening air.

This New York was a great place! There rose before him the vision of his little room in the Appian Way in Cambridge. Had he remained he would be just about going over to "Memorial" for his supper at the illassorted and uncongenial "graduates' table" to which he had belonged. Jaggers would have been there, and the Botany man, and that "fresh" chap, who ran the business end of The Crimson, and was always chaffing him about society. He smiled as he thought of the quiet corner of the club, and of the little table with its snowy linen by the window, which he had appropriated.

In Cambridge he had passed long months without experiencing anything more stimulating than a Sunday afternoon call on a professor's daughter or an occasional trip into Boston for the theatre, supplemented by a solitary Welsh rabbit at Billy Park's. Other men in the department had belonged to the Tavern Club, in Boston, or the Cambridge Dramatic Society, but he had never been asked to join anything, nor had he possessed the entrée even to the modest society of Cambridge. He was obliged to acknowledge-and it was in a measure gratifying to him to do so, since it threw his success into the higher relief-that judged by present standards his old life had been an absolute failure. No matter how genial he had tried to be, he had elicited little or no response. The days had been one dull round of tramping from his meals to lectures, and from lectures to the library. Although he had had no friends among his classmates, he had at least known their faces, but after graduation he had found himself, as it were, alone among strangers. As time went on he had become desperately unhappy and his work had suffered in consequence.

Then he had come to New York. As if sent by Fate, Rogers had appeared, sought his companionship, made much of him. He began to think that perhaps he had misinterpreted the attitude of his quondam associates—they were such a quiet, prosaic, hard-working lot-so different from these debonair New Yorkers. And was not the cane they had presented to him on his departure a good evidence of their esteem? He swung it proudly. How well he recalled the moment when old Curtis had placed the treasure of gold and mahogany in his hands and, in the presence of his colleagues, had made his little speech, expressing their regret at losing him and wishing him all success. Then the others had clapped and cheered and he had stammered out his thanks. The presentation had been a tremendous surprise. Well, they were a good sort; a little dull, perhaps, but a good sort!

Then, too, he felt himself a better man for his association with Rogers and his friends. It was such a new sensation to be appreciated and made something of that he had grown spiritually broader and taller. It had been very hard in Cambridge, where he had felt himself neglected and passed over, not to be selfish and spiteful. His standards had imperceptibly lowered. He had "looked at mean things in a mean way." Here it was different. With genial, broadminded associates he had become warm-hearted and liberal. His drooping ideals had reared their heads. felt new confidence in and respect for himself. Now he looked the world squarely in the eye. His work was improving, and the faculty at Columbia had expressed their appreciation of it. Life had never been so worth living. No one, he resolved, should ever suspect how small and narrow he had been before. He would always be the cheerful, generous, kindly chap for whom everybody seemed to take him. He had become a new man by reason of a little human sympathy.

"How busy people are!" he thought.
"I guess I'll have another try at Rogers." He crossed the Avenue, found the house, and rang the bell. The bay-window of the drawing-room was on a level with where he stood, and he caught a glimpse of Mrs. Rogers sitting beside a cozy tea table, and of little Jack playing by the fire. The maid, slipping aside the silk curtain before opening the door, inspected the visitor.

"Mrs. Rogers is not at home."

Brown was paralyzed at such open prevarication.

"I—I beg your pardon. But I think Mrs. Rogers is in."

"Mrs. Rogers is not receiving," curtly replied the maid.

Brown, vanquished but unconvinced, turned down the steps. At the bottom he stopped with a quick breath and glanced back at the house. Then he gave his trousers leg a cut with his goldheaded cane, and with a courageous whistle started up the Avenue again.

He was a bit puzzled. He was sure he could have done nothing to displease his friends. It was probably just a mistake; they had visitors, perhaps, or the child was not well. would call up Rogers on the telephone

next day and inquire.

He walked to the boarding-house and in the little hall bedroom he called "his rooms" put on the dinner coat of which he was so proud. It had cost sixty dollars at Rogers's tailor. He had never owned anything of the sort before. When he had been invited out to tea in Cambridge, which had been but rarely, he had always worn a "cutaway."

He found Stebbins, the club bore, in the coat-room, invited him to dinner, and insisted on ordering a bottle of fine old claret. Stebbins, in his opinion, was most clever and entertaining.

After the meal his companion hurried away to an engagement, and Brown, lighting a cigar, strolled into the common-room, drew an armchair into the embrasure of a window, and sat there dreaming, at peace with all the world. The kindly faces of Rogers, his wife and little Jack mingled together in a drowsy picture above the fragrant smoke wreaths. The bitterness of his past was all forgotten. The poverty and loneliness of his college days, the torture of his isolation in Cambridge, the regret for youth's lost opportunities faded from his mind, and in their place he felt the warm breath of love and friendship, of kindness and appreciation, and the tiny clasp of the hand of little Jack. "God bless them all!" He closed his eyes. It seemed as though the boy were lying in his arms, the little head pressed against his shoulder. held him tight and kissed the curly hair; his own head dropped lower; the cigar fell from his hand; behind the curtain Brown fell fast asleep.

Half an hour later into his dream floated the voices of Rogers and Winthrop. A slight draught of air flowed beneath the curtain. Someone struck a bell and ordered coffee and cigars close by, and the cracking of six or seven matches marked the number of those who had sat down together beside the window. He listened vaguely, too comfortably happy to disclose himself.

"You've got a lot of college men, I hear, in the district attorney's office, remarked one of the group, evidently to Rogers. "How do you like the

work down there?"

"Oh, well enough," came the reply. "Trying cases is always interesting, you know. By the way, Win, speaking of college men, exactly who is your friend Brown?"

The dreamer behind the curtain smiled to himself. "Rogers might

well ask that," he thought.
"Brown?" returned Winthrop. "You wrote me he was in New York, didn't you? Why, you must have known him in Cambridge. He was the great light of my class-don't you remember?-president of the 'Pudding,' stroked the 'Varsity, and took a commencement part besides. A kind of 'Admirable Crichton.' I'm glad you've seen something of him here.

There was silence for a moment or

Obviously, thought Brown, Winthrop was confusing him with someone

"No, no," exclaimed Rogers impatiently, "you mean Nelson Brown; but he's on a tobacco plantation down in Cuba. The man I speak of is a little chap with a big head and protruding ears. You introduced me to him at the Colonial Club a year ago last spring."

"Oh, well, I may have done so," answered Winthrop. "I don't recall it. I think there was a fellow named Brown who used to hang around there -but he's no friend of mine. Who

said he was?"

"Hang it! You did yourself, in your letter to me," came Rogers's re-

"Nonsense! I was writing about

Nelson!"

Rogers smothered an ejaculation

BROWN 91

more forcible than elegant, but his annoyance seemed presently to give way to amusement, and he laughed

"Look here, boys, what do you think of this? Two years ago I run on to Cambridge, and while there happen to meet a chap named Brown. A year later he turns up on the Elevated and greets me like a long-lost brother. I mention the incident in a letter to Win. He replies that Brown is the finest thing that ever came down the pike. He refers to Nelson Brown. I suppose he means my Brown. Thereupon I take this unknown person to my bosom and place my home at his disposal. He promptly squats on the premises, drives my wife nearly frantic, bores all my friends to death, and in a short time makes himself an unmitigated nuisance. Fortunately, he hasn't asked me for money. Now, who the devil is he?"

"Don't know him from Adam!"

said Winthrop.

"I know who he is," interjected one of the others. "Took a course of his on the 'Philology of Psychology' or the 'Psychology of Philology' or something. He's just an ass—a surly beggar-a sort of-of-curmudgeon!'

The window curtain trembled slightly, but no one noticed it.

"I can tell you rather a good story about Brown," spoke up a voice that "You know had hitherto been silent. I taught for a time in the English department last year. Brown meant well enough, I guess, but he was an odd creature. His great ambition evidently was to get into society. Every Sunday he would put on his togs and call on all the unfortunate people he knew. Finally everybody showed him the door. He got to be so intolerable that the department fired him, to our intense relief. No one cared what became of him-so long as he only went. But Curtis-you remember old Curtis with the white hair and mustache?—he felt sorry for Brown and thought we ought at least to make a pretense of regret at having him leave. He suggested various things, but his ideas didn't arouse any sympathy, and we thought that was going to end the matter. Not a bit of it. Curtis went into town, all alone, and, although he is rather hard up himself, bought a gold-headed mahogany cane for forty-five dollars, and next day, when we were all at a department meeting, presented it to Brown, from the crowd, and got off a whole lot of stuff intended to cheer our departing friend. Of course we had to be decent enough to see the thing through, and Brown took it all in and almost wept when he thanked us. A few days afterward Curtis came around and wanted us all to contribute to pay for the cane."

"Well!" responded Rogers. "Even my little boy knew there was something wrong with him the first time they met-children are like dogs, you know, in that way. Jack whispered to his mother while Brown was grimacing at him, 'Mama, is that a gentleman?' Thought Brown was a gas-man or a

window-cleaner, you know."
"Poor brute!" commented Winthrop. "Anyhow, Harry, your mistake has probably given him a lot of pleasure. No wonder he seized the opportunity. You can drop him by degrees so that, perhaps, he'll never suspect. Still, if he's as thick as you say he may give you trouble yet! Hello, it's a quarter-past eight already! We shall have to run if we expect to see the first act. Come on, fellows!"

Half hidden behind the curtain in the window, Brown sat staring out

into the night.

Hour after hour passed; the servants looked into the deserted room, observed him, apparently asleep, and departed noiselessly. One o'clock came, and Peter, the doorman, crossed over and touched him gently on the shoulder, saying that it was time to close the club. Brown mechanically arose, followed Peter to the coat-room, and then, with eyes still fixed vacantly before him, silently passed out.

"You've left your cane, sir!" Peter

called after him.

But Brown paid no heed.

COALS TO NEWCASTLE

I CARRIED to my lady's house last night Red roses such as June's warm arbor graced, And roses white, oh, marvelously white And sweet as summer's own, the sun-embraced Of garden plots and gorse and thymy waste! Though lately parted from the parent bough, I could but mark how faded and misplaced The red rose seemed beside her cheeks, and how The white but poorly matched the marble of her brow.

Then to my lady's beautiful abode
I took a string of pearls on which was hung
A flashing gem wherethrough still ebbed and flowed
The light of Afric suns when Time was young—
Ere Isis's and Osiris's praise was sung!
Her grateful lips paid tribute to the prize;
But I, I lent my heart and soul and tongue
To sing the row of pearls therein that lies,
And those dear diamonds, her blue, joy-litten eyes.

Whereto shall I direct my eager feet
For some delightful treasure that will be
A new possession, matchless and complete—
A better gift than rose or rosary?
Give her heart's love, you say, and constancy!
I have of love deep and exhaustless wells,
But this is given her abundantly
By every breathing thing her beauty spells.
Indeed, it is Love's House where my fair lady dwells!

EDWARD W. BARNARD.



A BRAVE GIRL

"We-ell, that depends, Mr. Scrimgeur. If it's the kind of poverty that has to wash its own dishes, I do; but if it's the kind of poverty that can't afford more than a dozen servants, I could endure it."

AN EVENING OF TRUTH

By Charles Battell Loomis

SCENE—Drawing-room of a richly decorated apartment in Central Park West. Some half-dozen people are variously disposed in the room, most of them looking bored. Hostess (Mrs. Vane) and her husband stand near the door. Enter Mr. and Mrs. Wood.

HOSTESS

Oh, dear, it's you, is it? I'm really sorry you've come, because I know you won't mix with my other guests.

MRS. WOOD

Indeed! Well, I came only because I knew it was your last Wednesday, and I thought I might meet someone who would be of use to me. Mr. Wood said he'd much rather have stayed at home and read the paper. Didn't you, dear?

MR. WOOD

I certainly did. If there is anything I hate it is these "evenings" where there's too much music for comfortable talk and too much talk for good music. Still, I'm here.

HOSTESS

You're really in luck tonight, for I expect Count von Walzen. The mere fact of his being here will set me up at least one round on the social ladder, and I don't suppose you know another person who could get him by hook or by crook. It is my ambition to become a social leader.

HER HUSBAND

She has the brains for it, but neither the face nor the figure. Lucille is not as good-looking a woman as she was when I married her ten years ago. Do you think she is, Wood?

MR. WOOD

Not by a long shot! Mrs. Wood and I were commenting on it last night. We saw you in the Delormes' box at the Opera.

HOSTESS

Well, it's singular, but I said to John last evening that your wife had only her good looks to recommend her and that I'd rather have brains than a pretty face.

MRS. WOOD

I'm glad you admit my good looks, but do you know I hate you because you do seem able to get on in society while we are just where we were when we married. It's all Ed's fault, though. He is hopelessly bourgeois.

HOSTESS

Very true, but when it comes to family what have you to boast of, my detestation? Wasn't your mother a second-rate boarding-house keeper?

MRS. WOOD

Yes, she was, and I've always prided myself on the fact that few people know it nowadays, and surely no one would ever guess it to look at me.

HOSTESS

Still, a pretty face is a gift from heaven, while brains can be cultivated; and brains have been in our family for generations. I'm the first one with any social aspirations.

MRS. WOOD

And I'm perfectly frank in saying that what success you have had is commendable because you are positively homely.

HOSTESS

As my mother was before me, but intellect showed in her face as it does in mine. Oh, I do hope the count will come! I only value him in the estimate that others put upon him. Personally, I understand that he is caddish, but he comes of a very old Berlin family and to do him honor is to be honored in return by some of the richest families in New York.

(The Count enters.)

HOSTESS

Oh, my dear count, my evening is a success.

COUNT

How very American! Success, success, success! It is in the air. Who are those people who just walked away as I came in? She is so pretty and he is so plain that they must be husband and wife.

HOSTESS

Yes, they are, but they are people whom I do not value at all. They are of no use to me; on the contrary, I know that they consider me useful to them and I hate a one-sided affair like that. But you, I cannot tell you how delighted I am to see you be-

cause you will raise me at least three rounds on the social ladder.

COUNT (good-naturedly)

Really, it is well worth while to eat your probably ostentatious supper and drink your presumably bad wine if that is the case.

(Enter MISS GLADYS with HENRY.)

HOSTESS (smiling)

I'm glad you've come, my dear. You are fresh and pretty and you'll be quite a decoration. But who is the awkward fellow with you?

GLADYS

Allow me to present Henry Demarest. I don't like you to refer in that way to him. We are engaged, and I love him better than anybody or anything on earth.

HENRY

Yes, and I love her devotedly. I have no money to speak of, but I am going to marry her and make my way in the world slowly but honestly.

(Introductions follow and COUNT

COUNT

It will be slowly if it be honestly in this or any other country. The absolutely honest and honorable millionaires can be counted on the fingers of one's right hand. I rather like your looks. You are very plain, but there is a manliness that is American in its best sense. I like the young men of this generation of your countrymen.

HENRY (politely)

As a matter of fact, I do not value a foreigner's opinion one way or the other, but I do not think I am plain. Do you, Gladys?

GLADYS

I think you are the very handsomest person I ever saw in my life. Do you think me pretty?

HENRY

If you did not exist there would be no such thing as prettiness in the world.

COUNT

See here, I thought that everybody was speaking the truth this evening. It has certainly sounded so, but that was more like a courtier's speech. Miss Gladys is pretty, but not so pretty as that.

HENRY

Excuse me, count. You have no right to impugn my sincerity. I say that Gladys is the most beautiful woman that ever existed, and also the best.

(They all walk away. Enter MR, and MRS. COWEN. She is overdressed and showy. He is a nonentity.)

HOSTESS

Oh, dear me, here comes that inexpressibly vulgar Mrs. Cowen! I wish she were dead and buried.

MRS. COWEN

Good evening. What did you say?

HOSTESS

I said I wished you were dead and buried. You are the quintessence of vulgarity.

MRS. COWEN

That is interesting to me because I know you mean it, but as for me, I do not consider myself vulgar in the least. I know lots of people who are vulgar, but it has never been suggested to me before that I belong to that class. In fact, I don't believe you know a vul-

gar woman when you see her, unless you happen to be looking in the glass.

COUNT (upon being introduced)

Pardon me, but our friend is quite right in regard to you. In Germany I might go for years from drawing-room to drawing-room and I would never meet anyone as vulgar as you, because in Germany riches do not buy position. If your husband had not made millions in copper you'd be circulating among very common people on your East Side. You see I know your town, and it is really so.

MRS. COWEN

Oh, I know that Jimmy is vulgar, but I think I have elevated him since we were married. We use a great deal more silver on the table than we used to.

COUNT

On the contrary, if I'm a judge of faces your husband has sunk. Before you were married he was merely plain. He had no desire to live beyond his station. You have given him social ambition, and as he is not a man of good taste, he has become vulgarized. If you live together twenty years, while you may obtain a cheap polish, you will both really sink.

MRS. COWEN

It's interesting, but I don't believe it.

(The guests are now taking their departure.)

MR. and MRS. WOOD (to HOSTESS)

Bored beyond expression. I hate the kind of music you've had tonight classical and tuneless.

HOSTESS

The music was all right but your ears did not prosper it. Don't come again.

MRS. WOOD

Oh, we won't! I don't believe I could drag Mr. Wood out again.

MR. WOOD

You couldn't. (They exeunt.)

COUNT (to HOSTESS)

Well, this has been interesting to me. I can see that you are a woman of brains with social ambition, and the means to gratify it, and with a vast deal more taste than is usual among parvenus. I really wish you success. If you come to Berlin my mother will receive you at her home, but merely as interesting curiosities—never on a real equality, you understand?

HOSTESS

But we'll feel on a perfect equality. Every American does. Good-bye. I'm really grateful to you for coming. It has given me prestige.

COUNT

Oh, you needn't thank me. I enjoyed your music, which was worthy of German musicians, and your supper was both well served and tasteful. I did not expect it, and I wonder how you have caught the knack. You Americans must be as imitative as the Japanese. Auf wiedersehen.

(Exit Count.)

MRS. COWEN (coming up with her husband)

Well, we're off. I've caught on to several tricks that I will imitate, and I've enjoyed myself. My, aren't you homely! But you dress well.

HOSTESS

I can't say as much for you, and you are positively gross. I should think it would worry you. I'm glad you enjoyed yourself, for the presence of that adorable count has made me goodnatured. It won't displease me if you come again.

(Exeunt the COWENS.)

GLADYS

Good-bye, my dear Mrs. Vane. We've had the most perfectly delightful evening.

HOSTESS (kissing her)

I'm glad, my dear. How did you enjoy the music?

GLADYS

Music? I didn't know there had been any. Henry and I have been in a corner all the evening and I've thought only of him.

HENRY

And I of her. Do invite us again. We've had the time of our lives.



A MATHEMATICAL STUNT

ONE added to one equals one,
But of course the one must be won;
Then add a divorce—
That's easy, of course—
And one minus one equals one.

THE PLAY AND THE PUBLIC

By Clyde Fitch

HERE are two principal divisions of all plays-the Good Play and the Bad Play. Then these divisions are divided into two again-the Bad Play that draws, and the Good Play that does not. Then there are countless subdivisions, and divisions "on the side." Then by itself, in lonely grandeur, stands the Play That Is Too Good For The Public. Don't you believe it! The Play That Is Too Good For The Public is making the woman's excuse of "Because." The true Big Play makes the universal appeal to the plush minds downstairs and the unupholstered hearts in the gallery. The intellectual play can be good in its kind; so can the melodrama; you pay your money and you take your choice—unless you are a deadhead. The professional deadhead has naturally no point of view. He sees only the plays that are not good enough to attract whole audiences by them-selves. I have heard of one honest, unprejudiced, fair-minded deadhead, who, after sitting quietly through two very bad acts of a play, himself silent in face of the jeers and sneers of his fellow-audience, finally in the second entr'acte went out and bought a ticket so that he might hoot and condemn the piece to his heart's content. Alas, the poor deadhead! He is the lifeline thrown to a play drowning in a flood of public abuse!—the stomach pump used on a play poisoned by the critics!--the stimulant given a play frozen by the public cold shoulder; and sometimes—but how few times! the medicine does save a life that's worth while.

To return to the play; the great play, of course, is the one that appeals. to both the mind and the heart. Certain great men have done this. Certain other great men have done half; then their appeal is halved. They satisfy the intellectual on one side and the rest on the other Shakespeare did it all-Molière almost-certain Germans a great deal. Today, Ibsen, with his wonderful fundamental ideas, pleases the intelligent crowd, bores the romanticists and angers the beauty lover with his lack of all but intellectual beauty. Maeterlinck drugs the senses and delights the mind, and puzzles the popular opinion, and outrages the conventional attitude. Hauptmann and Sudermann satisfy and stimulate the intelligence, and put a cogwheel in the box-office-I am writing, it must be understood, purely of American audiences. All these are, of course, the boldest, best known examples and instances. I am using them for that very reason, as I take it for granted this will not be read-at any rate not read through-by people who have made any serious study of the drama. I imagine myself to be writing for the general typical audience in a successful theatre-people who've been to see "Candida" once -because it has been talked aboutand like it but don't agree with the one, or else with the other, in general discussion - and "The Girl From Kay's" twice.

This is the audience that the manager dearly loves and the erudite critic fights. It is the antithesis of the deadhead gathering. They pay for their tickets and ask in return to be

entertained. It is a composite gathering, difficult to please from all points of view; a gathering anxious to be amused, satisfied to be interested, willing to be moved, but absolutely intolerant of being bored. I think it would rather, in the bulk, be entertained by a worthy medium than an unworthy, and it stops to differentiate just about that much. At any rate it's sincere, this audience, which is more than I can say for some of its managers, actors, actresses and authors. It says frankly in effect that it wants to be entertained, interested; if in an artistic way, so much the better-as witness the great triumph always of good plays artistically done. But it will not be bored by "art for art's sake," if that art is "buncombe" and really art for business's sake! This audience is, to use a slang term, "fly." Moreover, it does not pretend it is the ideal audience. It openly confesses there is the big intellectual play, for some, but not for all of it. It only asks for itself to choose what it wants. In return it gives you an honest medium to work upon, generous in its approval and applause when it gets what it wants.

After all, this audience has a good disposition, and it doesn't really mind being taught something either, so long as you sneak in your lesson. Don't let it know what it is taking till the lesson is down. All this goes a long wayand it is not only in America that this audience rules. In London it is even more pleasure loving; for every one theatre there where "prose drama" is played there are five play-houses where the Tune and the Girl reign in successful revolution. In Paris Antoine's Theatre is small, and Réjane and Jeanne Granier and the theatres of the Boulevard draw the crowds. Even the Français of late years has "hustled" to add to its repertoire amusing satirical pieces; last season giving one comedy which was accused by the critics of being almost a "vaude-It was a case of a miss being as good as a success. So those of us here who love the more serious theatre must not feel we are any worse off than Paris and London, so far as the temper and disposition of our audience are concerned. In Germany and in Austria it is different. There they have a big, serious-minded audience which goes to the play at seven o'clock, with a rested stomach and a free mind. And in Germany they do keep alive the fine plays, and keep a living repertoire of great ones.

Of course there is no real test, except time, by which to prove the great play. For great plays may have faults. It is their faults that make great men human, and why shouldn't it work so with plays, too? No man can say—true, some do!—this play will last, that will not, for the power of prophecy went out with the days of the sibylline leaves. And the price our journals pay for knowing the news of the moment is the news of the future.

The plays that have lasted are valuable to us as literature and as documents. Technic never has kept a play alive through the centuries. Technic alone is machinery, and we improve all machinery year by year. Outside of their literature, many of Shakespeare's plays are documents of hourly life and manners in the days of Elizabeth, and if you are interested in knowing what life was in town and country before and during the Restoration read Wycherley, Congreve, Beaumont and Fletcher. You will find there the small human document you won't get out of history per se. So Sheridan reproduces the social Georgian era, Oscar Wilde the late Victorian, and in France Lavedan, Hervieu and Capus are giving the Paris and France of the twentieth century for future generations to reproduce for themselves if they wish.

I feel myself very strongly the particular value—a value which, rightly or wrongly, I can't help feeling inestimable—in a modern play of reflecting absolutely and truthfully the life and environment about us; every class, every kind, every emotion, every motive, every occupation, every business, every idleness! Never was life so va-

ried, so complex; what a choice, then! Take what strikes you most in the hope it will interest others. Take what suits you most to do-what perhaps you can do best-and then do it better. Be truthful, and then nothing can be too big, nothing should be too small, so long as it is here, and there! Apart from the question of literature, apart from the question of art, reflect the real thing with true observation and with sincere feeling for what it is and what it represents, and that is art and literature in a modern play. If you inculcate an idea in your play, so much the better for your play and for you-and for your audience. In fact, there is small hope for your play as a play if you haven't some small idea in it somewhere and somehow, even if it is hidden-it is sometimes better for you if it is hidden, but it must of course be integral. Some ideas are mechanical. Then they are no good. These are the ideas for which the author does all the work, instead of letting the ideas do the work for him. One should write what one sees; but observe under the surface. It is a mistake to look at the reflection of the sky in the water of theatrical convention. Instead look up and into the sky of real life itself.

Of course one can do all this and still have no play at all. There must be, first and last and in the middle, always the Play. That is what the writer who has not his technic misses. The other thing, on the other hand, is so often missed by the technician. The greatest example today of the technician and idea-ist, working together, is Ibsen. But that doesn't mean Ibsen is a great popular dramatist. He is not, because of the other thing he lacks. Oscar Wilde was not flawless in his technic, but each play has its inherent idea, and each reflects absolutely that modern social life it repre-Pinero has proved himself a master of technic, and so has Henry Arthur Jones, and both men love a play with an idea. But no one at the present moment is getting the es-

sence of his environment in thought, word and deed, as Hervieu, Lavedan, Donnay and Capus. Hervieu with the idea for the basic principle—the idea serious-Lavedan and Donnay the idea social; Capus, all sorts of ideas together!-any old idea!-so long as it is always life—especially the life superficial, with the undercurrent really kept under. Mind you, a very good play can be built which is false to life, misrepresenting it, maliciously or through ignorance. The motives of the play may be true, and they will give it success, but it will not be literature and it will not be art-poor, bedraggled word! It has begun almost to take on the shoddy hues of the word "lady." "Lady" we have replaced with "woman," but our language is not rich enough to give us a word or a phrase even to use instead of much abused "art."

"Realism" is another sufferer. With two-thirds of the general public "realism" means something ugly, or horrible, or puerile. A beautiful thing may be portrayed realistically as well as a brutal thing. Realism is only simplicity and truth. The great effort in the theatre is to create an illusion, both as to practical scene and as to story. Realism in the emotions of the play, and in the paraphernalia of the scenes, is the greatest adjunct to both. The one great gift so far of the modern stage is realism, to make up to us for some of the poetry and imagination of which it has robbed us. And yet realism is not opposed to poetry and imagination. Because some people have disliked some form of realism they have rejected the whole. As a matter of fact, it is the audiences themselves, whether they like it or not, who have created the demand for realism. The audience today knows a great deal. I'm not sure it doesn't know too much. It is not easily deceived, not easily convinced. It does not go to the theatre like the child who delightedly starts to play with "let's pretend"-not at all! It keeps out of the game, and watches others "pretend," never crossing the footlights

itself; but from its own ground criti-about the theatre-as you will, good cises even with its emotions. I sup- and bad, wrong and right, art and pose it's all right. Every time, every period has its own mark of individuality, and after all, criticize and talk the caldron!



IF I could wake from out this dreamless sleep, So calm, so still; If I could break the bonds of slumber deep And feel the thrill Of pulsing life in all my veins again; If I could feel : My heart throb once with all its old sweet pain, My soul would reel To thine; drunk with the joy of new-born life I'd call to thee Swift reveille to all the old dear strife 'Twixt thee and me! My lips would press thine own with rapture deep; My heart to thine Would whisper all the secrets that this sleep Hath told to mine. Take heed, O ye who breathe, and, breathing, live, Say all thou must; Of thy heart's fulness generously give, Lest thy sad dust Wail for the golden words it left unsaid, And, lying mute, will rest not, though 'tis dead.

FANNY GREGORY SANGER.



CORRECT

UIBBLER—Say, Sellers, isn't your sign, "Children's Toys," rather tauto-logical? Who plays with toys but children? SELLERS-Well, I don't deal in guns, fishing tackle, poker chips, automobiles or any other men's toys.

SEEKERS

By Robert E. MacAlarney

7E talked of them in whispers long before we dared to speak of them aloud. The grown-up folk seemed to be upon intimate terms with them, whereat we marveled. Some day we, too, might be able to refer to them lightly, but that day was remotely set.

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Even Henderson, the most apathetic of younger brothers, broached the subject to Margaret and me at luncheon. We were alone as was our wont, and fruit biscuit was to be the next and

final course for discussion.

"Who are They?" asked Henderson. Margaret, who had pondered the hidden veil with me before, looked in my direction appealingly. But, manlike, I made as if I did not see her.

"Who are They?" repeated Henderson, with undignified insistence.

Then Margaret spoke very slowly. "Don't be silly, Henderson," she said. "They are people, of course."

The arrival of Nora, bearing the fruit biscuit, delectably hot, brown and smelly, relieved us for the time of further need for speech. Henderson fell upon his share of the dessert, wolfing it horridly. "Oh, Nora, we were to have had three apiece," he said, with his mouth full. Margaret and I, chewing deliberately to prolong our gustatorial delight, had scarcely tasted our first segment of curranty crisp.

"Two apiece, Master Henderson," corrected Nora. At times nurse is disagreeably decided. Hearing her utter her decree, Margaret and I, mindful of Henderson's predatory instinct when driven to it, pooled our remaining supplies in a safe haven between our plates, where he eyed them with

cannibal yearning. Then, it being suddenly borne in upon him that successful filching from the commissariat was out of the question, he burst into disgustingly apparent tears and outcries; after which crocodile effort he was conveyed through the swinging doors into the butler's pantry, and, I doubt not, was there gorged with the identical delicacies denied him in our vigilant presence.

'The little pig is probably stuffing himself," I said, lingering over the last crumbs. "Nora is making a first-rate

cry-baby out of him."

Margaret evinced a commendable spark of loyalty to the absent. "He's very much younger than we are," she

"But women always get wiggly when it comes to a man in trouble," I replied. "You're always doing it when we play 'Cid.' When I am beating down Henderson's guard with my mace you scream at me to stop."

Margaret flushed with consciousness that I was speaking truth. "But you have a better shield than Henderson," she urged extenuatingly. "And his arms get tired. And then you are ever

so much braver than he is."

I was not an utter victim to her blandishments, however. "My shield is better because I took a whole day to hammer flat the baking-powder cans Nora gave me," I remarked. "I put them on with carpet tacks. Henderson put his on with nails, although I told him they would go through, and scratch his arm in the melly.". French battle terms have always had a fascination for me. .

"And then he never can play being

a 'well-greaved Greek' very long because his legs hurt. Nora scolds dreadfully about the tears in his stockings." Margaret warmed to her work.

It was my turn to flush. For, do my prettiest, even I had not become armorer sufficiently skilled to pad homemade greaves so as to prevent rent stockings in the hot encounter. "I warned Henderson not to use sardine tins because the edges were always jaggy," I returned weakly. "And bother Nora! A woman never really appreciates deeds of derring-do."

Not long afterward another manifestation of the mystery was vouchsafed to us, this time by the chance remark of an "Older." Father and Mother are "Olders," as are the people who come to see them. Nora is a "Half-Older," because she really belongs to the Play-room; and Cook and Mockridge are "Outside Olders" thus did we early draw the lines of

caste.

We had been indulged in the luxury of taking tea with the family, a guerdon of totally angelic behavior for the day, and unhappily utterly dependent upon Nora's verbal report. The three of us, far set at the remote end of the table, were making inroads upon the damson preserves. It was while I was remonstrating, with whispered threats, against Henderson's prospecting for the bits of lemon peel at the bottom of the jar, that Margaret gave me a convulsive kick under cover of the tablecloth. I left Henderson to his swinish task, and harkened.

One of father's entirely repugnant acquaintances was speaking. I often marveled at the bald-headed, squeaky-voiced people who now and then invaded the house. This one was no exception to the rule. Before, during the apportioning of the meat, which it was our wont to regard with a coldly critical eye, I had noticed this guest engaged in gobbling tactics to which Nora would brutally have called our attention had we been guilty of them. Now he was speaking fussily, and bobbing his head like a sparrow drinking.

"I believe They say so," he said.

My heart leaped, but with dismay.

Was it possible that squeaky-voiced,

familiar terms with the mystery?

Father swallowed some coffee and

Father swallowed some coffee and then uttered the mystic word, "Export?" It was an interrogation.

The bald-headed gentleman waggled his head vigorously. "I understand They do it in the Open Market," he

said.

Margaret's foot flew against my shin with recurring violence. Even Henderson left off gurgling over his damsons. Here indeed was new detail of the mystery. For They did things in Open Market, wherever that might be. Now that we had a vantage point wherewith to begin our investigation there was hope that much might be

accomplished.

"The geography after tea," whispered Margaret, and I reviled myself for not having been more faithful to that branch of Play-room education. Might not "Open Market" have been staring at me from red or green map background for weeks, without my dull senses realizing its import? Were we not De Sotos with the flood of the Mississippi rolling out before our eyes? Henderson, looking at us, snuffled ex-

I bethought me that delicate attention would pave the way best. So it was that the depleted jar of preserves was outstretched in my hand when I addressed the other end of the table. "Please, sir," I said, speaking to the bald-headed man, "please, sir, what was it They did? And will you

have some damsons?"

pectantly.

"And where is the 'Open Market'?" added Margaret breathlessly, supporting me bravely. "I mean, what map shall we take to look it up?"

An awful, tense silence followed our participation in the table talk. I saw father turn to mother with a startled look, and the bald-headed man put his napkin to his mouth and stared at us through his glasses.

"H'm! I declare! Most extraordinary, I'm sure!" he said. Henderson, little duffer, clattered his boots against the rungs of his chair and sniveled some miserable sentence about wanting to know who They were, too.

The deluge, as was to be expected, was not long in the coming. But Nora separated Henderson from his perch with a deal more tenderness than was manifest in the way she banished us from the dining-room, after a meaning look from mother. A mad feeling of resentment at the injustice of it all laid hold of me as the hall door swallowed us up. The bald-headed man was still looking dazed and muttering, "I declare! It's most extraordinary!"

"Huh!" I shouted, as Nora's palm propelled me into outer darkness. "I don't believe there is any such place as 'Open Market.' And I don't believe you know who They are."

Thus was our voyage of discovery checked, rudely and humiliatingly. Henderson screamed all the way to the Play-room, but I have reason to believe that was because of the memory of damsons uneaten. His soul was not stricken as were ours. To Margaret's quiet sobs in the dark I could administer no comfort. But I did stealthily get out the geography and scan every map an inch at a time, in the faint hope that after all the baldheaded man might have been telling the truth.

Existence continued family tea-less for a long time after that. Margaret and I spent long afternoons in the garden swing, letting the old cat die with painful deliberation, and ruminating. We were leading changed lives. Even broken reeds, however, with favoring breezes, lift themselves into a warped similitude of their former straightness. Thus it was with Margaret and myself. Henderson meanwhile rioted in a carnival of stomachic disorders, brought on by gorging himself with our desserts, which we had vowed never to touch again until our quest for They should be accomplished.

Then came an afternoon when we felt that something uncanny was in the very air of the house. Mockridge

was in a paroxysm of testiness, and the stable grooms invaded the drawing-rooms carrying big parcels, some-thing which in itself was ominous. Marooned in the Play-room, with our single coign of vantage the balcony, we could but vaguely guess at what was happening below. Nora was practically invisible save at rare intervals. when she came romping into the Playroom, saying unkind things about Cook, which I resolved to lay before that worthy's comprehension as soon as we were released from durance vile. Even Henderson received some cutting proofs of her tongue's razor edge, and was cowed by the utter unexpectedness of it. We supped scantily upon Nora's sewing-table, Henderson omitting to petition for forbidden accompaniments of the meal; in itself worthy of comment. And we retired swiftly and with despatch, pondering the vicissitudes of Play-room existence.

I awakened to see Margaret, a wraith in white, standing by my bed. With the opening of eyes came the sound of entrancing music. Henderson at my side puffed stertorously.

"Quick!" whispered Margaret. "I've been and peeked and I believe They have come downstairs."

I grunted, loath to rise. But then there was the music. And despite me I was half convinced. In the dark "Cross my fancy conjures easily. heart," uttered Margaret, impatient at my playing the sluggard; and in the hazy shadows of the night lampwhich Nora had certainly forgotten to take away with her-I saw her fingers describe upon her bosom the necromancer's sign-manual of truth. one bound I was beside her. And so keen was my eagerness that I was angered when she suggested tarrying a moment to see that Henderson was tucked in, safe from catching cold.

The hall between the Play-room and the rest of the house was fuzzy and draughty as we traversed it, stealing as craftily as we had in the old days when "Indians" was our game. The hall to the balustrading beyond had been a rolling prairie in those

days. And many a night, after the "Olders" were asleep, had we silently hunted grizzly upon the staircase rocks, and relived the stout-hearted existence of Sitting Bull and Two Strikes, with Henderson doing tearful but enforcedly speechless duty as the paleface victim at many a sanguinary tomahawking. And if Nora prattled about "sniffles"—which we did acquire to a certainty—and pottered around the Play-room hunting for imaginary draughts, was there good reason for undeceiving her?

Soon we had left the Play-room far behind, and were scuttling for the turn to the tower where the domain below might be scanned with impunity. What a sight dazzled our eyes as we peered together into the sudden blaze of light! For all the people of our fancy came and went beneath us, stepping to the music of invisible players. I clutched Margaret's arm and sputtered into her ear: "Where are They? Have you picked

them out yet?"

As I spoke Henderson's sleepy whine was upon us—that and the clatter of one shoe, which he trailed behind him. "Want Nora to take me to see the grinder-organ man," he

whimpered.

I think he would have bellowed had not my hands pinned him, kicking, beneath the ample folds of a convenient rug. When released he was willing to listen to reason. In fact, it was he who proposed that we should approach nearer, by means of the conservatory, from which a narrow iron stairway led to the tower. Thus we could outflank the fairy folk, who, we well knew, became invisible the moment they saw the eyes of mortal gazing upon them.

I led the way, Margaret holding the skirts of my garment after the manner of the thread clue of "The Princess and the Goblins," Henderson scrambling slatternly in our wake. To our joy the door at the bottom was unlocked and the warmth of the conservatory was grateful to our bare legs. It is odd how cool September nights can be

when the "banshee chill," as Nora calls it, is upon one. I scraped against a jaggy palm horribly, but bit my tongue and maintained a stoical silence. All the same I never believed that story about the Spartan youth and the vulture, for I should say a vulture was a bit worse than even a cactus. Then we heard someone talking.

Between the palm leaves, quite plainly evident in the glow from many lanterns, sat a knight and a lady, passing fair. Henderson's eyes bulged. "Is that They?" he squeaked. Margaret's breathing was by gasps. The knight got upon his feet while his sword rattled. Something told me that he had been sitting in the Siege Perilous.

"They say that all women are cruel," he said out loud, looking at the lady, whose silk dress crackled as she got

up, too.

"You don't understand," she answered, in a choky sort of way. The knight looked at the Siege Perilous

gloomily.

"You see, you don't understand, Archie," the lady kept saying. She was crying, I think, and the knight, melting, would probably have kissed her, had not Henderson scraped his shin and let out a howl which was most

unmanly of him.

It was a trying moment, for the knight and the lady hastily got far away from each other, and I thought they were going to disappear like the boggarts and the nixies. But Margaret was out in the middle of the conservatory, trembling yet bound to see the thing through. Could I remain behind? Dragging the now vehement Henderson by the wrist, I also tottered out into view, the lady giving a stifled scream at the advent of each apparition. "Please, sir," said Margaret, addressing herself to the knight, "are you They?"

Things were rather confused after that. The rest of the fairy folk somehow came running in, and there was a great deal too much talking over us and no turning into thin air; so much talking, in fact, that I expected every moment father and Nora might appear, although I knew they must be fast asleep upstairs. Finally father did appear, and somehow he, too, was in fairy dress. But when Nora came she was plain human, and redolent of nothing but severity and the Playroom gaol. It was upon Henderson she fell first.

"My blessed lamb catching his death!" she cried over him. "As for you, Miss Margaret and Master Lester, you'll be the finish of him yet." All of which I considered needlessly brutal, because Henderson had come an unbidden comrade upon our tour of dis-

covery.

In the doorway, as we were hurried away to upstairs banishment, stood a personage in whom I recognized the bald-headed man of the tea table,

although his attire was fearful and wonderful to look upon.

"We've looked for 'Open Market' and it isn't on the map," I shouted. "I don't believe there is such a place." And then I knew sure enough it was the bald-headed man, for he stared vacantly at our retreating forms and muttered: "I declare! It's most extraordinary!"

Even mother did not understand. She came to us after we had been tucked away. "Please be good children until tomorrow, dears," she said. When mothers fail to understand, aspiration is stunted indeed.

So we never knew who They really were, and I have never found a map with "Open Market" in black letters upon green or red. Somehow, I doubt if I ever shall.



IN ABSENCE

I WALK alone, when dimly burning
Late sunset from the ocean slips;
The night-mist spreads her arms, in yearning,
And lays moist kisses on my lips.

Oh, may it comfort you a trifle
To know, if doubt your bosom fret,
That, though these kisses choke and stifle,
They are the only kind I get!

MADELINE BRIDGES.



A NECESSITY

- No, I can't give anything to the hospital just now. I'm too poor this summer."
 - "Why did you buy a new automobile, then?"
 - "Because my old one couldn't make over sixty miles an hour."

LOVE'S WAYS

AN instant only and her eyes Flashed lightning like the angry skies;

And o'er her forehead, curving down, Fell dark the shadow of a frown;

Then backward, deep and stormy fair, She tossed the tempest of her hair;

Then of her lips' full-rose disdain Made a pink-folded bud again;

Then quicker than all utterance, All changed: and at a word, a glance,

Her anger rained its tears, then passed, And she was in my arms at last;

The austere woman, doubly dear, And lovelier for each falling tear.

But why we quarreled, how it grew, I cannot tell, I never knew.

Perhaps 'twas love; he who, with tears, Would show how fair a face appears;

As, after storm, the sky's more blue, A wildflower's fairer for the dew.

MADISON CAWEIN.



MOTTOES

FOR POSTMEN: True to the letter.
FOR BARBERS: Two heads are better than one.
FOR THE INMATES OF INSANE ASYLUMS: Out of sight, out of mind.



NOT THE ONLY ONE

YES, I always carry my big money in my vest pocket. Why, where do you carry yours?"

"In my wife's shirtwaist front."

THE PAINTED VEIL

By Edna Kenton

M ISS CORNELIA perched uncertainly on a chair and held a poster effect in blackand-red crayons against the wall. Miss Janie hopped earnestly about, peering near-sightedly.

"Over this way, Cornie," she kept saying. "No, that way—not so much

-there!"

She handed up a Bodenhausen, tastily reproduced in colors. Miss Cornelia took a fresh balance, and unprotestingly held it four inches to one side of the Mrs. Fiske poster à la Becky. By and bye it, too, was hung. Then Miss Cornelia climbed uncertainly down, and the two sisters stood together, surveying their now com-

pleted domain.

To an onlooker they would have given a peculiarly distinct impression of belonging to the bird kingdom, though Miss Janie resembled a somewhat frivolous brown sparrow, while her sister, thin and gaunt, looked more like a spare raven, stepping solemnly about a small world. And if they looked like stray birds, their tiny four-room apartment undoubtedly resembled a nest, snug and compact, yet with many a fluttering end, many an incongruous material.

They were in their little sittingroom. An alcove opened off from it,
in which an old-fashioned parlor
grand piano sat heavily. The alcove
was lighted merely from a narrow airshaft, but the Cravens sisters were very
high up, in a crazy old building, which
boasted only stairs for ascending purposes, and being therefore so near the
heavens a modicum of light filtered
through the cheap stained-glass win-

dow that cut through the red burlapped wall like a buttonhole slit. This suite, in a previous incarnation, had belonged to an artist, who had hung the walls in crimson burlap and had painted thereon many a weird design. In the dining-room a procession of storks stood at attention about the dado. Here, as in the little sitting-room, a faintly washed design of poppies straggled over the walls in tones of red that slipped dully into the

faded background.

Besides the piano there was nothing in the alcove. Above the piano, in a shiny black frame, hung a fine steel engraving, flanked on one side by a water-color study of some rocks at low tide, and on the other by a charcoal drawing of the head of Ajax. In the sitting-room the poppies showed up more splashily against the more faded background. Hung against them was a collection of paintings and drawings and reproductions crazily mixed. There was the Mrs. Fiske poster and the Bodenhausen. A plaster Venus, heavily veneered with burnt umber, stood on a bracket against a plaster bas-relief of William Morris's shaggy head. There was a St. Cecilia happily hobnobbing with a newspaper cartoon of Roosevelt. A magazine cover was pinned up between another steel engraving and a water-color.

All the furniture was very old. A quaint mahogany table stood to one side, with a tea service of beautiful old silver and china. The chairs were of old design, of the days when dresser knobs were of crystal and all things were claw-footed. The only new piece of furniture was a pine table that stood

in a corner, laden with staring white plaster saints, tubes of paints, some brushes. That was Miss Janie's corner. Between the two narrow windows was an old mahogany writing-desk, with drawers that stuck inconveniently. That was Miss Cornelia's corner.

Miss Janie spoke first, with awe and reverence. "We're settled at last, Cornie," she said. "We've got our studio at last, and work to do—even I."

A knock sounded and she fluttered to the door. A young man stepped gaily from the outer to the inner hall. He was a handsome young fellow,

twenty-six, perhaps.

"I ran across that brush you'll need, Miss Janie," he said. "No—heavens, no!—take it! You'll find it a good size for the finer work, and somehow those foreigners are uncommonly apt to be nasty about the gilt beads and things. And here's a fern for Miss Cornelia-Miss Cuthbert sent that up, left it with me this morning when she went out. That's all right-she has a great lot of them in her windowssays they grow fine—no trouble at all. What's that-a house-warming Sunday afternoon? That's good. Yes, any songs you want, and any amount of them. I'll speak to Miss Cuthbert about them. She has a glorious new one-no, I just ran up to say good luck. I sha'n't come in."

Miss Janie came back into the sitting-room with shining eyes. "Everybody told us, at Cravensville," she began abruptly, "that we'd find the city cold and abominable. And there was never anyone in the whole town so kind to us, who ever did so much for us as the people we've met here, Mr. and Mrs. Marsden and Ellen Cuth-

bert and Guy Philbrook."

Miss Cornelia spoke briefly. "We haven't lived in Cravensville, Janie, for

the last twenty-two years."

Miss Janie looked up, surprised. Unlike Miss Cornelia, she was not a mystic, and though she was not unfamiliar with the theory that where the spirit is there is the life, any sudden statement of the idea came to her unfailingly as a shock. Those last twen-

ty-two years of Cravensville life, to Miss Janie, were never so distinct as now when they were forever ended. To Miss Cornelia, now as then, they were actually as if they had never been.

Yet they had been years of realities. From the time of their earliest girl-hood Cravensville folk had held the Cravens girls to be in their own minds superior to their surroundings. They had gone away to school, had spent much time in the city; they had strange ambitions and fancies. It was known that Janie painted. It was whispered that Cornelia wrote. This sort of thing the Cravensville folk resented. Never had a prophet risen from their ranks. Never would honor be granted to any such aspiring upstart.

Twenty-two years before—that is to say, when Janie was eighteen and Cornelia twenty-four - their greatest joy and heaviest sorrow had come in sickening succession. Janie had sold her first picture at a sum fabulous in her eyes, a river scene, painted in oils, to a young man from the city. That his judgment of it was wholly sentimental Janie of course had no means of knowing. When, two days later, a city newspaper sent Cornelia a cheque for two poems and one love story, the two sisters felt their cup of joy filling to the brim. One week later Colonel Cravens had a paralytic stroke that left him entirely helpless. Six months later the mother went hopelessly blind.

During that one week of happiness Cornelia and Janie had planned out their happy future. In the fall they would go up to the city and take a studio—delightful word—in some artists' quarter. Janie would attend art school and paint more pictures—she leaned to miniatures. Cornelia would study quietly in the school of life and write—Cornelia leaned to poems. By and bye fame would come and friends among some great ones. Like Carlyle, Janie and Cornelia were hero-worshipers. In seven days ambition had reached the height of Jonah's fabled gourd. Under swift com-

and seemingly died.

Yet it had great vitality, that wondrous plant. As the score of years slipped by one tiny root kept alive, the root of dreams, that herb of magic and of mystery. It was rooted in Cornelia's heart. In that spare breast there lay a world of tender hopes and small ambitions, some few of which found their blossoming in words to

Janie. The rest lay hidden.

As the years went by Miss Janie gathered a small class about her and so kept up her queer little drawing and her oddly sympathetic painting. She had a small voice which she kept in practice-indeed, of the sisters Miss Janie was the more gifted, for whereas Miss Cornelia could only write, Miss Janie could sing and play and paint and compose a little. Yet no more pictures sold at seemingly fabulous sums, and but few stories and poems ever found their way into the newspapers. There was only the tiny family income and the tinier pension to live on. But the Cravens girls made it do, and every year they turned unturnable skirts, and boiled to pure whiteness faded cotton gowns, and made old garments serve a further purpose, all that they might keep up their subscriptions to a musical journal and an art journal and a literary magazine. They lived on the happenings of the outer world. They passed an existence in a tiny province, but never lived two mortals less unprovincial. And always fancy wove a veil of misty fineness that hung bright with painted visions before the perspectiveless vista of the years. Gradually for both of them its pictured dreams became their realities, their hard reality nothing but a dream.

It was two months now since their parents' death. When they turned from the last grave with the earth on the first one still red and staring, they faced without word or planning the carrying out of dreams. A month later, like two birds of eerie passage, they went up to the great city. They fluttered timidly into the office of their

ing affliction it sank down and withered father's lawyer, listened placidly to his words of discouragement, decided on an art school and a boarding-place, and one month later were settling into. this downtown nook that came miraculously within their means. Miss Cornelia, through a syndicate, was managing to dispose of a certain number of love tales for minor newspapers. Miss Janie, after a few weeks at the art school, discovered that an art school was too great a luxury for their slender finances. She caught up with modern methods sufficiently at least to realize with her accustomed cheerfulness that. she was too far behind to catch up for many moons, and she set about discovering a means to an end. She found it shortly, in a saint factory, where thousands of staring plaster images were molded daily, whose golden halos and cerulean robes were added later. Most of this was done in the factory studio, but a few special models were reserved for a better fate, and were to be delivered semi-weekly at Miss Janie's door. The first instalment had just arrived, and the longed for studio was at last, on this morning, an accomplished fact.

By and bye, after the fern was placed, and the new brush tested, the two sisters settled down to work; Miss Janie industriously robing her saints, and Miss Cornelia dressing up a beautifully sentimental love plot, with a hard, set face that belied her happy

heart.

At two o'clock they put up work, and Miss Cornelia got their simple luncheon. Over it they planned the refreshments for the house-warming. Even with only tea and cakes and bread and butter there was chance for much discussion. After long argument they decided to leave for another time an experimental mixture of uncolored Japan and Young Hyson and to cling to their old blend of Young Hyson and Oolong. They decided on home-baked macaroons instead of almond cakes bought. They compromised on the bread and butter question by deciding to have both white and brown.

The house-warming passed into his-

tory. The young artist, Philbrook, had been good as his word. He marshaled up his friends, and he and Ellen Cuthbert sang satisfyingly. Miss Cornelia and Miss Janie moved delicately among their guests. All of the callers, with the exception of the lawyer and his wife, were young. Miss Janie fairly blossomed in the eyes of her sister, for she chattered and laughed and made merry, and was unconscious of anything but pure happiness. Miss Cornelia was conscious only of the younger sister and her joy. When the afternoon was over and the guests all gone the sisters sat in the twilight almost silent, save for now and then the breath of a thought. Words are poor things for realizing dreams twenty-two years old.

They were not lonely as the months wore on. A few old family friends were kind to the stray little gentle-women. They came to know many of the workers and students in the building. Mrs. Marsden, the lawyer's wife, was touched and amused by the quaint little establishment, and her young daughter became possessed of an infatuation that amounted to an

obsession.

The sisters felt they had never seen anything so beautiful as Mercedes Marsden. A Sunday afternoon without her was a day without sunshine. They rejoiced at the friendship between her and Ellen Cuthbert, at the good comradeship between her and Philbrook. They were a little coterie to themselves, even in the midst of people. The three young people had taken the two little ladies under a protecting wing. Sometimes they went together; more often Philbrook went with them alone, to odd places for dinners, to private views, to studios and concerts. Before six months were past Miss Cornelia allowed herself to own that after so many years she and Janie were living in the atmosphere they had craved so long; that their Sunday afternoons were always popular; that week by week it became harder to gauge the amount of cakes to buy or prepare for the next day's onslaught: Miss Cornelia's hickory-nut cakes, and her own blend of two green teas, tried at last, became famous through the building. They had found the great city nothing but cordial to them, nothing but kind. They had found its heart alive and warm. They had come out of Puritan environment straight into the heart of a bohemia, and they hardly knew it by name, or, knowing it, dreamed that they were aliens.

One Sunday morning they were dressing to go with Philbrook to see some pictures in which he was interested, when a note came from

Mercedes.

"She wants to bring some friends down with her this afternoon," Miss Janie cried delightedly. "A cousin of hers and his sweetheart. They are musical, and she wants Ellen and Guy here. Couldn't we have all of them stay to tea, after the rest go?"

Miss Cornelia laid aside her halfarranged street gown. "You go alone with Guy," she said, with curt decision. "There won't be enough cake. I'll

bake some more."

She helped the protesting Janie hurriedly to dress. Something—perhaps it was the exquisite spring day, perhaps the scant mention of young lovers, perhaps the growing joy of six months culminated — something made Miss Cornelia's soul swell and grow big within her. She wanted to be alone. She heard gladly Philbrook's knock. She followed Janie to the hall. She gave one brimming glance at them as they went downstairs. Then she went back and shut the door and bolted herself in.

While she was beating up the sponge cake she laughed and cried in foolish abandon to her solitary joy. She was seeing the fulfilling of dreams. She rejoiced with an almost mad rejoicing. She exulted grimly, but not for herself. She was six years Janie's senior, and she owned candidly to her forty-six years. She had had her chances, two lovers—three, if one might modestly count one too shy to propose. She had cared for none of them. Her

ideals had been higher than any of them could ever meet. But through them she had tasted a little of the joys and some of the mysteries of life, and she suffered much for Janie and her blighted girlhood. Janie had never had a lover. During those days of care and Cravensville Miss Cornelia had not rebelled against fate. But in these latter days she found herself fiercely fighting-for Janie-that Janie, at scant forty, might have the boons denied her at eighteen. She knew that she herself looked every day of her forty-six years. Her hair was iron-gray. Her eyebrows met in a masculine line over two utterly feminine eyes. Heavy lines scored her face. Her figure was spare and lean. But Janie was different. She was slightly plumper. She had fair hair which curled naturally and lay in ringlets all about her face. Her evebrows were delicate and did not meet disfiguringly above her eyes. Her hands were pretty and plump, instead of being made up of bone and knuckle. She had what Miss Cornelia held to be a beautiful mouth, and what Miss Cornelia considered a ready wit and charm that accounted in toto for the standing of their Sunday afternoons.

While the cake was baking in the oven, and later while she was frosting it, she thrilled with the delight of things unowned. Yet deep in her heart she owned boldly to it. What she wanted most of all to come to pass for Janie was a lover. Her fancy was running riot. She was ashamed of herself, and she exulted with tearful smiles at one and the same time. There had been other things than the mild extravagance of cake-baking that had kept Miss Cornelia in that morning. There was something beautifully maternal in her longings for Janie, in her

plans and her desires.

Miss Janie came in alone, solemnly. Her voice was hushed. Her eyes were full of light. Miss Cornelia glanced shrinkingly at her. She felt the change that had come over her sister. She asked a few questions, general ones, and Miss Janie answered them inconse-

quently. It developed after a bit that she and Philbrook had gone nowhere in particular, had not seen the paintings. "We just walked—and talked," said Miss Janie vaguely. Miss Cornelia pressed no questions nor needed answers. She held herself in that hour

to be seer and prophetess.

Guy Philbrook came up early that afternoon. He brought some flowers, spring blossoms that bore no relation to hothouse flowers. For an hour he was the only guest. Miss Janie was playing when he came, and she did not get up from the piano. By and bye he went over to her, and began to sing to her accompaniment. Without having the slightest gift for it, Miss Janie had a mild mania for accompanying singers, and she worked assiduously over songs for him. Philbrook was like Miss Janie, versatile. He sang as he painted, remarkably well, that is, Miss Cornelia sat and watched them both shyly, flutteringly.

"Oh, sing it over," she begged as the last strains died. Her voice sounded through the faint tinkle on the yellow-keyed piano of the closing meas-

ures of "Der Nussbaum."

"Shall we?" Miss Janie asked as her tiny fingers fled industriously through the last two runs. The young man nodded, smiling, and Miss Janie began again her conscientious pursuit of the melody. He took up the first line: "Es grünet ein Nussbaum vor dem Haus," following as he could Miss Janie's flighty flights over the keyboard.

When it was finished again he spoke: "This is where Schumann and Schubert have been sounding all week."

Miss Janie smiled without confusion. It was Miss Cornelia who blushed vicariously. She had noted the practicing of "Der Nussbaum" and "Sylvia" and "Auf dem Wasser zu singen."

Outwardly the afternoon was like many another one. People of various sorts came and went. Only Miss Cornelia noticed the peculiar light that still shone in Miss Janie's eyes when she glanced at Philbrook, or the serene answering confidence in the young man's face as he looked back at her.

No one noticed Miss Cornelia, her upliftedness, as she moved among her

guests.

When all the callers had departed there were left after all only Mercedes and Philbrook to help eat Miss Cornelia's sponge cake. She spread the tea cloth on the mahogany table in the sitting-room. Miss Janie set it. In the kitchen Philbrook cut up nuts and fruits for a salad and was dressing it. When he had mixed it he brought it to Mercedes as she sat cutting cake and piling it up on a silver salver.

"It's your turn now," he said sim-

ply.

Mercedes blushed slightly as she took the bowl and the plate of blanched lettuce. She began to arrange the leaves in the quaint old dish. A few moments later Philbrook came in from the kitchen, followed close by the sisters. He stared, fascinated, for a moment.

"What a picture!" he muttered.
"Great heavens, what lines and color!"

Mercedes was sitting in a square bay-window, in an old-fashioned. straight-built chair. Her slender body was slightly bent over her work. Her dark hair fell in lovely confusion over her forehead. She was wearing a white wool gown. In her lap she held the Chinese bowl with its nest of green. Behind her a Chinese lily sent up its straight green leaves and white blossoms. Through the windows came the last rays of the sinking sun, setting tonight with a strange green light.

Mercedes looked up suddenly, flushing through her clear skin. Miss Janie ran over to her and kissed her lovingly. "I never knew anything so lovely could just happen!" she cried. "Nor did Guy. I thought things had to be

posed."

Miss Cornelia's pale eyes glowed with eagerness. She reached out an avid hand for further instruction. "What made it, Guy?" she asked.

Philbrook laughed a little. "All of it," he said, and would say no more.

Mercedes got up quickly and pushed back her chair. She brought the salad over to the table. The Japanesque pose and setting dissolved as if by magic. Both she and Miss Cornelia were very quiet through the meal. Miss Janie and Guy talked

happily and intimately.

Miss Cornelia made them all sit still while she cleared away the tea things. She was so happy that night that she wanted the snatches of solitude the little kitchen afforded. she washed the silver she heard stray bits of talk from the sitting-room. Guy at last was analyzing the reasons for the beauty of the little picture of an hour back. Miss Cornelia caught eagerly at drifting phrases, bits of artists' "shop." It came to her as it had never come before, the difference between this life of beauty and friendships and love and that fettered one at Cravensville. month, too, Janie was to enter on another term at the art school. She had the right people about her at last. She had life and love at last. What more could life hold than this for the elder sister? Over the teaspoons she dreamed dreams unspeakable, things not to be thought of deliberately, to be thought of only when they came drifting like kaleidoscopic bits of a beautiful future. And only for Janie.

When she came back into the sittingroom Philbrook was singing again. Mercedes was playing for him. Miss Janie was watching them, sitting in the same straight-backed chair where Mercedes had sat while the sun poured its green light through the windows. She gestured silently to Miss Cornelia, and bent toward her eagerly.

"Tonight I want to tell you something about this morning," she said after the manner of one to whom the mere telling that there was something to tell was a relief unspeakable. Her eyes were shining softly. Miss Cornelia caught her breath.

"About you—and Guy?" she asked,

with shameless daring.

Miss Janie nodded happily.

Miss Cornelia sat back and closed
her pale eyes. Only now did she let
herself realize what her dreams through

all these months had been. She looked at her sister again. Miss Janie's eyes were fastened on Philbrook, lighted with "the light that never was," Miss Cornelia quoted softly to herself. It was impossible to mistake that shining light. She sank back again. Her heart was filled with joy. All her dreams had become truth. That painted veil of fancy was not illusion, but Truth itself. What might be, was. There was nothing in life to be dreamed of that did not exist, somewhere, for the dreamer.

She became suddenly conscious that Guy was singing "Der Nussbaum" again; that Mercedes was playing it—

beautifully:

Es grünet ein Nussbaum vor dem Haus, Duftig, Luftig Breitet er blätt'rig die Neste aus. Viel liebliche Blüthen stehen dran; Linde Winde

Kommen, sie herzlich zu umfahn.

Miss Cornelia opened her eyes and looked at them, the singer and the player. Mercedes's eyes were on the keys; Philbrook was looking steadily down upon her bent head.

Sie flüstern von einem Mägdlein, das Dächte Nächte, Tagelang, wusste, ach! selber nicht was. Sie flüstern—wer mag verstehen so gar Leise, Weise! Flüstern vom Bräut'gam und nächsten Jahr.

Miss Cornelia was looking at them very quietly, the singer and the player. In her mind, however, was another picture—a picture of the late afternoon, of the white-gowned girl, the Japanesque arrangement, the greens in accessories and atmosphere. Suddenly she looked across the room at her sister, sitting in that straightbacked chair. She looked back at Mercedes. Another picture rose in her mind, unheeded before, but distinct to a hair; a picture of the earlier afternoon, when at the piano another figure sat, playing conscientiously the same haunting melody. She saw it distinctly, the quaint little woman in pure profile, with fair hair tossed about a face faded and old. She saw with pitiless eyes the little snub nose, the peering, near-sighted eyes, the streak of crude blue light that fell through the stained glass across the finely wrinkled little mouth, the tiny fingers laboriously hurrying through the runs:

Das Mägdlein horchet, es rauscht im Baum, Sehnend, Wähnend Sinkt es lächelnd im Schlaf und Traum,

The silence in the dim room lasted for many minutes. Finally Mercedes moved uncertainly. Her eyes went first to Miss Cornelia and then hurried on to Miss Janie and rested there.

"I must—go," she said half fear-fully. "I—can go alone—I know."

Miss Cornelia caught her breath. She, too, turned toward her sister, to see in Miss Janie's eyes the light that had shone in them all day long. Guy made a quick step after the girl, and then held himself back. But his eyes, too, were shining.

Miss Janie fluttered to her feet. "Yes," she said quickly, "you must go. Guy, get her wraps." She put the long coat about the girl and nodded to Philbrook. The young man went out into the little hall and came back with his outdoor things on.

Mercedes swerved away slightly. "It isn't necessary," she breathed. "Not further than the car." She kissed both sisters hurriedly and slipped into the outer hall.

Miss Cornelia was once again sitting in her chair when her sister turned

from the door.

"He told me this morning," Miss Janie cried happily. "He wanted to ask me about her father, what Mr. Marsden might demand in a man. He feels he can really think of marriage now that he has got on the staff of the Star Monthly. That song told her—he meant it should—I know the dear things are talking now. Guy said if he won her he wants to bring her here for the first few years. To think of having them so near us every day!"

Miss Cornelia straightened her thin shoulders and looked at her sister—she dreaded that first look, despite Janie's happy voice. A swift question leaped to her lips, a question that had no seeming bearing.

"Do you never miss anything, Ianie?" she asked harshly. "Never?

Are you always happy?"

Miss Janie looked with wondering eyes. "I was born happy, you know," she said. Suddenly she flushed, as if her cheek were brushed by the wing of a flaming thought. She bent over her sister. "We've always had each other, Cornie," she said. "I've always had you."

Miss Cornelia sat for many minutes while Miss Janie moved quietly about, straightening the room for the night. It had been, after all, only one day out of many years. The habits of a lifetime may not be easily broken. She knew where Janie's happy thoughts were. By slow degrees her own went timidly out in the night, following the two young lovers, dreaming their dreams with them, for her joy and Janie's.

2

SATAN FINDS MISCHIEF STILL

THE Devil was idle. He sat on the hillside meditatively chewing the end of his tail. The Angel was reading to him from Records of the Paleozoic Age,

and the Devil was very bored. This happened long ago.

Finally, as he sat eying the Angel with malicious intensity, his face lighted up with an evil inspiration. Without interrupting the reading—for he was a perfect gentleman—he took a chunk of misery from his pocket and began kneading it between his fingers. Afflictions were always growing luxuriously in the Devil's vicinity, and he did not have to reach far for the other ingredients that he wanted. A pinch of desolation was mixed into the misery and then a handful of torment, a trifle too much tribulation and generous measures each of distress, sorrow, grief, wretchedness, woe, unhappiness, heartache, anguish, suffering, calamity and evil.

When it was all mixed smoothly and to his liking he laid it into a bed of rue near at hand and ostentatiously went on listening to the Angel's reading. In a very little while, seeing out of the corner of his eye that the time was ripe, he

plucked the Angel by the wing. "Look!" said the Devil.

And there in the bed of rue was growing the most rare white lily that the hillside had ever known, a great lotus-blooming chalice, pure, radiant, fragrant and filled with a handful of golden seeds.

"Is it not beautiful?" said the Devil.

"Most beautiful," replied the Angel, going closer, and there was a long silence of adoration.

"Suppose we take the seeds of it and plant them on the earth?" suggested

Lucifer charitably.

"I will go myself!" said the Angel, with the light of a kindly purpose in his eyes. He swept the golden seeds into his hand and started away down the hill-side. The Devil put the end of his tail into his mouth again and bit it in his savage joy. He did not dare to laugh until the Angel was out of hearing. But at the edge of the hillside the Angel turned.

"We ought to give it a name?" he said benevolently.

"Call it Love," replied the Devil, and then he lay back in the bed of rue screaming with silent laughter. No more Records of the Paleozoic Age for him!

BEATRIX DEMAREST LLOYD.

VANISHED

By Charles Hanson Towne

Some thing that died Came back to me in bleak Novembertide, And at my casement wept and sobbed and sighed.

Something that fled To the still haven of the sleeping dead Came back to me ere the great dawn grew red,

And in the rain
That fell like silver at my window-pane,
Called me and called, and cried—alas!—in vain!

For I who slept
All tranquilly while darkness round me crept,
And wakened only once while the storm swept

About my door, Thought, "Surely 'tis the rain and nothing more." And then I dreamed—dreams never dreamed before!

Lo! to my eyes Came one more beautiful than calm June skies, Whose face was wonderful and wonder-wise.

"In the sad rain,"
She said, "I called to you, alas! in vain,
And nevermore can I come back again.

"In nights to be When the wild storm shall beat incessantly Outside your door in anguish loud and free,

"You shall but hear The rain's low voice come to your listening ear, And not hear my voice, clarion and clear.

"And you shall know
Only despair and anguish, harkening so—
You who slept on when I called loud and low.

"And you shall long
To hush from out your heart the rain's deep song,
Yearning to hear a whisper from my tongue.

"And you shall weep When you have wakened from your restless sleep; Weep that no tone of mine calls from the deep!

"You shall grow weary Hearing the rain's voice in the midnight dreary, Yearning for my voice, calm and soft and eerie!

"You shall awake, You who would not waken for my sake, And wish, when the rain sings, your heart might break!"

So now I rise When a great storm has darkened all the skies, And listen to the wild wind's melodies.

And oh, I yearn For that now gone, which will no more return, For that lost voice whose message I might learn.

And sadly, I,

Ere the white light of morn illumes the sky,

Listen in vain for it and softly cry—

"Give back to me
The vanished message, gone, oh, utterly;
Give back, give back, dead Opportunity!"



HALF BAKED

CHOLLY—What do you—er—really think of me?

Dolly—Oh, I presume you will be a pretty good sort of chap when you are finished.



PERHAPS SO

SHE—Brazen thing! It is whispered that she poisoned her rich old husband for his money!

HE—Oh, well, perhaps she thought his means justified his end.

HONEYMOON THE

By Gouverneur Morris

HE coffee and liqueurs had been long in coming. We got to talking about service and serv-Manners stood up for his beloved English; Cambell said that there was nothing so good as a good negro; and Prince Laniaski, who had been for many years in the Far East-or rather the Far West, for such it has becomeproclaimed the Chinaman.

"The Chinaman," said Laniaski, "neither makes himself understood nor understands what is said to him; but he does the work of three, and there is no

noise in the house."

"That's a blessing," I said.
"It is a blessing," said the prince.
"For example: I like your club; the restaurant is delicious; we are delightfully at home on this broad veranda; the moon is on the bay; it is even June; we are breathing the most delicious perfumes in the worldsalt water, roses and the smoke of Havana tobacco; there are no mosquitos; no one of us is sleepy; we shall talk and smile and dissipate until midnight; we shall not be disturbed; we are the motive in a poem. And yet there is one drawback: the boy who brought the coffee had unclean teeth and squeaking shoes. This would not be possible in China. Your Chinaman is noiseless. He is also a prestidigitateur. If he has provided for one only and seven arrive for dinner, there will be enough food for seven; yet the bill of the butcher will show no correspondent swelling. Except for one hour in the afternoon, when he smokes opium and recuperates himself, he will be noiselessly busy all day. When there is nothing to do in the house he

will pick flowers in the garden. When there is nothing to do in the garden he will wash himself and freshen his teeth. He will not steal the value of a pin or tolerate dust. Hercules needed a whole river to clean out the Augean stables; a Chinaman would have required nothing but a little more time

and a toothbrush."

"I have had some experience with them myself," said Cambell, "and I admit the truth of all you say. Nevertheless, I hold that your Chinaman fails in the highest attribute of being a perfect servant. My negro appropriates my bright-colored neckties and sherry; but he leaves my valuables strictly alone. He is indolent, when no one is looking, and very boastful; but he loves me and he loved my father before me; and, yes, I think he would die for me."

"I object to a Chinaman," said Manners, "because he looks like a China-

woman."

"I object to him," said Cambell, "because he has no affection. He is merely a very clever yellow mechanism, quite without heart."

"And what do you think?" said the

prince to me.

"I think," I said, "that Cambell is right about the affection. But I am

open to conviction."

"I knew a Chinese servant," said the prince, "who chose a rather singular way of showing affection to a white master. It was more than affection—it was an acute love. It is, of course, an isolated case, and does not prove the Chinese to be affectionate as a race, but I will tell it to you, and you shall judge if they may not have hearts that beat exactly as ours do. What I am going to tell you did not happen in the Orient, but in California.

"There was a man out there named Vigors-a bachelor of unblemished morality-who dabbled in the arts, and lived in a charming little one-story cottage on the hills overlooking the town of Monterey and its beautiful blue bay. The house was a little treasure, covered with vines into which you could sink your arm to the shoulderroses, red passion-vines, pipe-vines, shell-vines, wistaria, columbine, clematis, and I forget what all. Inside the house was full of amusing embroideries and pictures and porcelains, and also wines and cigars. Vigors was not rich, but he had enough. His house was as clean as the works of a brand-new watch. His little dinners were served noiselessly and rapidly; his garden was extraordinary, even in a country of extraordinary gardensso trig, so well kept, so weedless, so flowery. And except for a man to look after the horses, this was all the work of one Chinese servant named Fong.

"When breakfast or luncheon or dinner was ready, instead of the stale 'Dinner is served' or 'Monsieur est servi' of Occidental civilization, there was the graceful, noiseless entrance of the slim Fong, a deep bow, and the cheerful, appetizing announcement,

'Alight, mistah!'

"If Vigors had been a woman Fong would have said, 'Alight, mistah,' just

the same.

"I loved to put up at Vigors's. He was very good company, and affectionate—the most delightful of all the qualities of American men. If he liked you he said so, and was always doing thoughtful things to prove it. One night I said to him, Now, Jimmie, that servant of yours is too wonderful a subject to remain longer out of our conversation. Where did you get him?"

"Vigors laughed. 'I got him through another Chinaman,' he said; 'you must always get them that way. But I don't know any more about him than you do. We never converse. He can't understand what I say and I can't understand what he says. When I engaged him I tried talk, but it wouldn't do. I asked him how long he had been in this country, and he said, "Evlybody difflunt"—which was a facer. But he's well enough; I have no complaints. I've had him two years and I hope he will stay by me till I die.'

"'When you tire of him, Jimmie,' I said, 'I will engage him. For a Chinaman his face is very taking, and his manner of handling a dish would make my return to Warsaw famous.'

"'I will leave him to you in my will,' said Vigors, and we laughed and

discussed other things.

"The next morning I was smoking my cigar in the garden when Fong came out of the house with a large bowl and began to pick lettuce into it. I walked over to him and said, 'Fong, don't you ever want to go home to China?' And he answered, 'Alight, mistah.' Then I said, 'Do you like your master?' And he said, 'Alight, mistah.' Then I said, 'Why don't you like your master?' And again he said, 'Alight, mistah.'

"So I did not wonder that Vigors had long ago given up any attempts

at conversation.

"This happened long ago. I was visiting Vigors prior to making my initial trip to the Orient, and, as you may imagine, I was very—as you would say—very keen on all matters pertaining thereto. So I used to ask Vigors a great many questions about the characteristics of Fong

acteristics of Fong.
"'Tell me this,' I said once. 'Does
the creature ever show that he has the

slightest affection for you?"

"'Never,' said Vigors; 'as far as that

goes he might be a chair.'

"'Now, Jimmie,' I said, 'I believe that you are wrong. I will tell you why. This afternoon, when you were in town and Fong was in the garden and I was solitary and had nothing to do, I went into the kitchen to brew me a dish of tea. Now, as I passed Fong's room the door was open, and what do you think I saw on his bureau?'

"'I know,' said Vigors; 'you saw my photograph. I gave it to him by request, and he burns incense in front of it. It's a custom they have; you see, theoretically I am his father and his mother and must be kept in good humor. He would burn the picture instead of the incense without any compunction if it happened to be the custom.'

"'Anyway,' I said, 'you are very kind to him and he must like you for it." "'Oh, no,' said Vigors; 'they consider us foreign devils, barbarians, boors, what you will. They hate us.'

"The next day I was to sail from San Francisco. Vigors drove me to the station in Monterey, and we took leave

of each other with real affection.

"'Mind what I have advised you,' I said, 'and do not let the middle of life find you single. When I come back I shall hope to see you married to some charming young woman. And remember that if she does not like Fong I will take him off your hands.'

"And as for you,' said Vigors, 'when you come back you are to come to me at any hour of the day or night. My

door is never locked.'

"Then we shook hands and promised to correspond, which promise we mutually broke, and that was the last I saw of Vigors for three years."

The prince paused while the waiter with the squeaking shoes served us. When the man had gone he went on.

"Never take a man at his word," said the prince, "for it will lead you

into awkwardness.

"The next time I found myself in San Francisco I said to myself, 'I will just run down to Monterey and give that man Vigors a surprise.' He was a man that I remembered with true affection. I really wanted to see him again. So I boarded the Monterey express, and, after reading at various journals and magazines, fell asleep. When I awakened we were running through the lovely orchard country of the Santa Clara valley.

"Two seats in front of mine sat a bridegroom with his bride. Their heads were very close together, and it must have been their whispering that had wakened me. I heard the bridegroom say, 'Yes, dear, those are almonds, but my orchard is roses and lilies and—cherries . . . Do you think anyone is looking?'

"In fact, save for those two and myself the car was empty. And I with-

drew into the smoking-car.

"In time we reached Monterey, and I had a conveyance to take me and my portmanteau up the hill to Vigors's house. It was a charming, cool drive under the stars. There was the admixture of perfumes which is so delicious here tonight, the salt water, the roses and the tobacco, for I was smoking a Havana of the best. I thought a good deal about the bridegroom and the little bride in the train, for, though I never married, I have often wished to; and I wished that something really good like that might some day come to me.

"Well, there were lights in Vigors's house, and so I paid the driver and lugged my portmanteau through the garden—God, how good the roses and honeysuckles smelled!—set it on the doorstep and rang the bell. While I stood waiting I heard a clock in the

distant town striking ten.

"Vigors himself opened the door. His hair was mussed, and until he saw who it was that had disturbed him his face was very angry. Then he looked confused and embarrassed; and then, all of a sudden, he caught me by the shoulders and began to roar with laughter. Then he leaned against one of the veranda posts and gasped until he was calm.

"'What is the matter with you?' I

hier

"'Lani,' he said solemnly, 'I'm damn glad to see you, old man, but I was married at noon and we've just finished dinner.'"

"Good Lord!" broke in Manners,

"what did you do?"

"I permitted myself an Anglo-Saxon oath," said the prince, "and began to halloo frantically for my driver to come back. But he had already passed beyond recall. Furthermore, he was an old man and deaf.

"Vigors took me by the arm and drew me into the house, although I protested violently. He kept saying, It's all right, Lani—it's all right."

"The little bride was all blushes and confusion and prettiness. Vigors explained the visitation as well as he could for his embarrassed laughter—the little bride's hair was also mussed—and demanded that I should at

least spend the night.

"But I said, 'No, my dear people, I will do nothing of the kind. But I will do this: I will sit with you for five minutes and drink a glass of wine, and then, if you will extend hospitality to my portmanteau I will walk back to Monterey. But I shall never forgive myself for this intrusion, and you will never forgive me.'

"'I'll have Blois hitch up something

and drive you down, said Vigors.
"'You will not, I said. 'I will walk. I tell you I will walk.'

"So we settled it that way. And the little bride, to show how good a housewife she meant to be, fetched wine and glasses. While she was fetching them, I said to Vigors:

"'So you have taken my advice,

after all?

"'Yes,' he said, 'and between you and me, Lani, she's the dearest,

"'Yes—yes,' I said; 'as we Poles say, not a maiden but gold—pure gold.'

"Then she came back, and they both began to talk at once. And we all laughed a great deal. She was very pretty, very chic, very young—just the right age for a bride; but too young to have the care of a household. I made some remark to that effect. And Vigors said:

"'You forget Fong!'

"And the little bride—she was like a child, so rosy and candid—clapped her little hands and said:

"'Indeed, yes. I am to be taken

care of by the famous Fong.'

"'And will Fong manage for two?' I said. 'Is everything to devolve on that trusty one's shoulders?'

"'Everything,' said Vigors; 'for the

present, anyway.'

"'Later,' I said, 'you will have to have something with a cap and long streamers and an apron.'

"But the little bride looked so embarrassed that I was very sorry I had said anything of the kind. And I changed the subject hastily.

"'What did Fong say when you told him that you were to be married?"

I asked.

"Vigors laughed. 'Fong said,

"Alight, mistah."

"After that I rose to go, but the little bride said, 'You must not go yet; you must sit and talk with Jimmie. But I'm very tired. You see, it's been a long, hard day, and I think I'll go up. Good night.'

"She was perfectly self-possessed, and held out her hand to me. I bowed very low and kissed it.

"'May God have you in His care,' I

said. 'Good night.'

"Vigors went with her as far as the stair. When he came back he had a wonderful look, all tenderness and gladness, and I said, 'I am going in a minute, old fellow—have patience.'

"But he did not hear me, I think,

for he said:

"Isn't she wonderful!" and tears of real happiness stood in his eyes. So I fell in with his humor, and for a quarter of an hour we praised the little bride as I think few women have ever been praised before. Then I said that I would go, and took up my hat and coat. Vigors went into the hall with me. While he was helping me on with my coat neither of us spoke, and it seemed to me that I heard a curious noise emanating from some room on the upper hall.

"'What is that noise?' I said. 'It sounds like snoring and yet it doesn't.'

"Vigors listened a moment and laughed. 'Why,' he said, 'it must be a faucet that isn't working properly—sometimes they make a noise like. that when you first turn them on, before the water begins to run. Too much air in the pipe, I suppose.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'that must be it. Good night, old man. Forgive me for coming. Good luck, and God bless you!"

"And as I walked down the long road under the stars and the moon, smelling the salt and the roses, I thought a great deal about Vigors and the little bride. I pictured her as I had last seen her, so rosy and trustful, bidding us good night, and slipping away. I pictured her, too, after she had reached their room, kneeling perhaps by the side of the bed, and sending up a little prayer to the good Father who had given her happiness. And I pictured Vigors striding up and down in his study, all fear and nervousness and beatitude, looking at the clock, laying his ear against it to see if it was really going; clinching and unclinching his hand, and praising God. And I pictured him trembling and knocking upon the door of that room wherein there awaited him the roses and the lilies. But, gentlemen, I did not picture to myself that he would enter that room and find his bride lying across the bed with her throat cut from ear to ear.

"Yes, gentlemen—dead in her innocence. And the noise that we had heard was the noise of blood conflicting with air in her severed windpipe.

"They found Fong in the cellar lying on his face in a pool of blood. He had disemboweled himself. And they found also that he was a woman.

"It is not a pretty story," concluded the prince, "but I think it goes to prove that in one instance a Chinese servant loved a white master."

"But after all," said Manners, "she was a woman—so nothing is proved."

was a woman—so nothing is proved."
"Yes," said Cambell, "but do you
mean to say that Vigors hadn't known
all along? Was she good-looking?"

all along? Was she good-looking?"
"For a Chinawoman—yes," said
the prince. "But Vigors had not
known. He was a man who might
have gone to Arthur's Round Table and
disputed a right to the siege perilous
with the virgin knight, Galahad."

"What became of him?" I asked.
"He went mad," said the prince.



SILENCE

THE poets, with a cloud of words, eclipse
The moon of passion. . . . Nay!
For me, love, let me breathe against your lips
The things one need not say.

ANNA ALICE CHAPIN.



KEPT BUSY

"Does she read much?"
"Oh, yes! She reads the six best selling books, and you know how often they change."

HER VIEW

"I SEE that there is a movement on foot to forbid the marriage of all those in any way weak-minded or degenerate."

"Oh, John, isn't it lucky we're married?"

THE PLAINT OF THE RICH

Nothing to do, oh, people!
Nothing to do but spend.
Someone to amuse us,
Something to enthuse us—
Where is the next kind friend?

We've run all the gamut of functions— Conventional, splendid and freak; We'll blow half a million On just a cotillion, If only it's truly unique.

We've golfed and we've tooled and we've poloed;
We've searched high and low with our play;
On air-ships, like horses
And yachts and divorces
And autos, we'll soon be blasé.

The country is older than Noah,
The city, egad, is the same.
In bridge there's a yawn
For each thousand that's gone—
Do give us another new game.

We've used up all scenes and sensations
E'er dreamed by Pinero or Fitch.
By our money bereft
There is naught for us left—
So pity the poor, poor rich!

EDWIN L. SABIN.



HER DEFINITION

FRANCES," said the teacher, "what is a hyphen?"
"A hyphen is something you use when you break your word to stick it together again," replied Frances.



MEN dislike old maids. They are the statistics against man's irresistibility.

LES CONVENANCES

Par Hugues Le Roux

OYONS, Barker, votre impression toute franche? - Excellente, monsieur le

comte...

Cela fut dit avec un aplomb anglais, une pesanteur de poings prêts à la boxe. M. de Loyaumont eut un geste noble, qui signifiait: "La chance sait ce qu'elle me doit." Cependant sa nervosité continua de se trahir par le supplice qu'il imposait au cordon de son monocle, roulé entre ses doigts jusqu'à la convulsion.

C'était la veille du Grand-Prix et, malgré la confiance de son entraîneur, le sportsman se sentait mal à son aise! Sûrement Jaguar était une bête admirable. Il avait montré à Chantilly ce que l'on pouvait attendre de sa foulée. Si un pareil cheval ne prenait pas la tête, dès le départ, pour la garder jusqu'au poteau d'arrivée, il valait mieux déposer ses couleurs et vendre son écurie. Mais le champ de courses a d'étranges surprises! Et M. de Loyaumont, embarqué dans l'inquiétude, fronça ses sourcils aristocratiques au bruit d'un coup léger frappé à la porte du fumoir.

- Qu'est-ce que c'est, Firmin?

- Madame fait dire à monsieur le comte que M. Bérard a été fort indisposé cette nuit.

Les nobles sourcils de M. de Loyaumont se rejoignirent tout à fait. Il

- Il faut que j'aille voir le cheval. Je monterai ensuite chez M. Bérard,

avant déjeuner...

Il ne prononça pas un mot de plus, par mépris de la valetaille, mais vraiment il était tout à fait agacé. Quand il avait épousé la nièce de ce M. Bé-

rard, c'était sous la condition de ne point fréquenter l'oncle. Et voilà que ce négociant, avec l'aplomb des millionnaires, se permettait d'être malade chez celui que—fort impertinemment— il appelait son "gendre"!

Il ne fallait rien moins que l'excellente condition où se trouvait Jaguar pour rendre à M. de Loyaumont toute sa belle humeur. La croupe du cheval était peut-être bien un peu fuyante, les flancs trop larges malgré l'entraîne-Mais les muscles faisaient saillie sous un filet de veines dont on suivait la capricieuse géographie à travers une peau satinée et douce à la main.

Au moment où M. de Loyaumont entrait dans le box faiblement éclairé, Jaguar tourna le tête vers la porte. Comme pour mordre, il avança sa tête enfermée dans une muselière, puis il piétina la paille de ses pieds de devant. M. de Loyaumont lui passa la main sur le cou, avec un plaisir presque voluptueux. Et, de fait, l'homme et la bête se ressemblaient. La race apparaissait chez l'un comme chez l'autre, dans la maigreur énergique, dans l'aisance des mouvements, dans la finesse des attaches.

M. de Loyaumont passa le reste de la matinée à causer avec les gens d'écurie, à se faire conter les potins des jockeys et les bruits qui couraient sur les adversaires de Jaguar.

Il avait si bien oublié l'indisposition de l'oncle Bérard qu'il ne put retenir un haut-le-corps, lorsque au seuil de l'hôtel, Firmin lui dit sans préparation:

- Monsieur le comte, c'est une apo-

plexie!

Le malade était étendu dans un grand lit à baldaquin. Ses cheveux d'argent, rasés sur une tête toute ronde, et aussi l'éclat des draps, faisaient paraître la figure encore plus violacée. On avait largement ouvert le col de la chemise, et l'échancrure du linge montrait un cou tassé. Le ventre proéminent soulevait les draps comme un édredon; les mains étaient posées dessus, inertes. L'agonie du négociant semblait dépaysée dans ce lit à colonnes. Aux murs, des portraits de gentilshommes, poudrés, en habit rouge, en uniforme, la main sur des gardes d'épée, regardaient mourir ce gros homme dans leurs meubles, avec une nuance de dégoût. Une moue toute pareille abaissait la bouche de M. de Loyaumont, quand, du bout des dents, il demanda au médecin:

- Une indigestion, n'est-ce pas? Mais le docteur secoua la tête. Il avait essayé tous les révulsifs, les sinapismes, les sangsues, l'émétique. Rien n'y avait fait. M. Bérard semblait condamné. C'était un cas fou-

M. de Loyaumont saisit le médecin

par le bras.

- Impossible! mon cheval court après-demain... Et je ne veux pas le retirer.

L'homme de l'art eut un geste d'impuissance. Mais M. de Loyaumont n'était pas d'humeur à accepter une solution si contraire à ses volontés.

Il répliqua d'un ton décidé:

 Vous me répondez de votre malade, docteur.

Et il descendit chez la comtesse.

Il la trouva en conférence avec sa couturière. Mais il était si énervé qu'il ne prit pas garde à la présence d'une étrangère, et, croisant les bras:

- Vous savez la farce que votre

oncle nous joue?

Madame de Loyaumont était aussi agacée que son mari. Elle répondit

avec aigreur:

- Cela ne m'amuse pas plus que vous. Ma robe est prête, et l'on vient de m'envoyer mon chapeau, une mer-

Ces préoccupations égoistes achevèrent d'irriter M. de Loyaumont. Il

- C'est toute l'humeur que ce contre-temps vous donne?

- Vous voulez que je crie?

- Je veux que vous vous indigniez!... Un pareil manque de tact!... Choisir ma maison... Et cette semaine... cette date!...

M. de Loyaumont ne se contenait plus; il grommela entre ses dents:

- ... Ces manants!

Et il sortit en claquant les portes.

Le négociant mourut, le soir, à six heures, sans avoir retrouvé sa connaissance. Mais les héritiers étaient sans inquiétude sur ses dispositions testamentaires. Le bonhomme avait recueilli sa nièce presque au berceau. Il avait fait élever l'orpheline dans un couvent, avec les filles de la noblesse. Toute sa vie, il avait travaillé pour lui amasser une dot, puis des rentes. Il n'avait presque pas souffert de son ingratitude. Cela lui suffisait d'être la marche basse, la fondation du monumental escalier par où "son Hélène" était montée à la fortune. Et maintenant il avait dans la mort, malgré la surprise de sa fin, le calme de ceux qui, n'ayant point vécu pour eux-mêmes, quittent la vie sans regret.

En rentrant pour le dîner, M. de Loyaumont trouva Barker dans l'antichambre. Tout de suite, il se troubla:

- Il est arrivé un malheur à Jaguar?

— Non, monsieur le comte.

- Alors?

- C'est l'oncle de madame qui est décédé.

Malgré l'empire qu'il avait sur luimême, M. de Loyaumont s'engouffra comme un coup de vent dans l'appartement de sa femme.

Eh bien! dit-il, ça y est.

Madame de Loyaumont passa sur ses yeux un petit chiffon de dentelle.

- Il ne faut pas, dit-elle, que cela empêche votre cheval de courir. Mon oncle ne l'aurait pas permis.

Loyaumont haussa les épaules: - Je me moque de sa permission et je ne lui ai jamais demandé des leçons de convenance!

Il avait sur le bout de la langue: "A vous non plus!..." Mais il se contint, par habitude d'éducation. Madame de Loyaumont ne se tint pas

pour battue.

— Voyons, fit-elle, mon oncle n'allait pas dans le monde... Aucun de nos amis ne le connaissait... Est-ce qu'il ne suffirait pas que, vous et moi, nous nous abstenions de paraître, dimanche, sur le champ de courses?

Lovaumont ricana:

— Et que mon jockey mette un crêpe à sa casaque, n'est-ce pas? un

brassard de collégien.

Et comme la jeune femme objectait qu'elle avait vu le petit de Téramont courir le cerf peu après la mort de sa mère, le sportsman s'emporta tout à fait:

— Chasser est très deuil... et ce sont des convenances que vous devriez connaître! Ma parole d'honneur!... je vous croyais plus éducable!

Elle dit d'un ton froissé:

— Alors, que décidez-vous?

Sans répondre, M. de Loyaumont pressa la sonnette électrique. Il dit au maître d'hôtel:

- Envoyez-moi le cuisinier. Qu'il

monte comme il est.

Le maître-queux parut dans ses vêtements blancs, et M. de Loyaumont demanda:

- Casimir, êtes-vous organisé pour

me conserver une très grosse pièce dans la glace?

- Une grosse pièce, monsieur le

comte?

- Oui, un sanglier... un ours?...

Le cuisinier hésita.

— La semaine dernière, dit-il, j'ai perdu une belle alose. Il est vrai que la chaleur a diminué; on pourrait essayer, monsieur le comte.

Un léger abaissement de menton indiqua que le maître était satisfait de cette bonne volonté. Il dit avec ai-

sance:

— Voici de quoi il s'agit: l'oncle de madame la comtesse vient de mourir subitement. Si la nouvelle était connue avant dimanche soir, mon écurie ne pourrait pas courir. Installez une glacière dans l'ancienne remise et tâchez de conserver le corps. C'est entendu, n'est-ce pas? Et, maintenant, encore un mot. Vous le savez, je suis libéral. Avant comme après, je compte sur vous pour arrêter la langue de mes gens.

Un sourire de complicité passa sur les lèvres du chef. Il répondit avec la

déférence nécessaire:

- Monsieur le comte peut être tran-

quille...

Tout le monde, dans la maison, a mis de l'argent sur le cheval.



LOST JOYS

THROUGH utter dark and chartless space The day-god burns up to his place; And drops not from the stalk a rose, But in its place another blows.

Life's gift, or great or small, once given, Is as the flower, the star of heaven; Aye, Nature is not more than men—The lost joys all come back again.

JOHN VANCE CHENEY.

THE FIRST REAL LADY

T is remarkable how much we may know about remote personages.

Eve lived a long time ago. And yet today it is possible to speak of her

characteristics with authority.

We know, for example, that Eve was fickle. The fact that she was not surrounded by a lot of admirers was not her fault. Men were just as scarce at the first summer resort as they are today. But with the one she had Eve did the best she could. In spite of the Darwinian theory, she made a monkey of him.

And the only trouble with Adam was that, when he fell, he didn't land on

both feet.

We know also that Eve was unselfish. When she came across the first nice red apple she didn't hide behind a fig tree and eat it all herself and then come out and say, "Here, old man, is the core." But with rare generosity she gave it to Adam first. She believed when there was any new fruit around in trying it on a dog. "Take it, Adam," she said, "and if it gives you appendicitis, grip, pains in the back, a hacking cough, and makes a crank, a liar and a profligate out of you, I won't go back on you. I'll eat the other half, and stand by you to the bitter end, even if the price of necessaries is doubled and I have to run you in debt to keep myself respectable."

That was one of the great things about this kind, first lady of the garden. She didn't let her old side-partner meet the consequences alone, but she stood in with him to the bitter end. "As long as you're booked to go down in the express elevator to the basement floor, I'll go with you," she said, "and break

your fall."

And Eve did it. She not only broke his fall, but he also, patient and willing

sufferer that he is, has been broke ever since.

Looking back on Eve, as we can through the still lapse of dressmakers' bills and the long vista of spring openings that stretch the other way through the

golden past, we know now that she hated and despised clothes.

"Give me," said Eve, "a little of the long green; say an acre or so; that is all I ask to cover me from the biting draughts of the opera and the sharp, keen air of the ballroom. Give me a few old feathers, gathered by some chesty Nimrod, in remote quarters of the earth, that don't cost more than one hundred dollars an ounce, and I can worry along. All I ask is a few thousand dollars' worth of little things for my head and feet and hands and siren form, to last me for the next two weeks until I make out a list of the real necessities, and I can manage somehow."



NO CRITERION

PRESSMAN—Quills, the editor, is quite sick; he's in a very critical state. Scribbler—That's nothing; he's always too blamed critical.

A PHILOSOPHER OF THE TUB

By Channing Pollock

LARGE. portable bathtub stood in the office of the American consulate at Santa Anna, and during the course of a lull in the firing the head and shoulders of the American consul emerged from

the top of it.

"I hope you will pardon me for parading the appurtenances of my toilet before you," that official remarked to another head which had just been thrust above an overturned sofa. "After you had adopted the divan this happened to be the only bullet-proof article in the front part of the house."

"The position certainly is a most unconventional one," rejoined a pair of particularly pretty lips properly situated in the other head.

"Unconventional, perhaps," quoth the consul, "but not unprecedented. You will remember that a Greek gentleman renowned for his wisdom made a point of receiving in precisely this way.

"That may have been all right when Greek met Greek," the lips retaliated. "Its propriety in our day and circle is open to argument."

"And argument," returned the occupant of the bathtub, "is one of the things for which we have no time at present." There was a patter of bullets against the mud wall of the building, and both heads were withdrawn from view.

In the street outside a detachment of barefooted Federal troops was adjusting with a detachment of insurgents a difference of opinion as to the personnel of the Government of Salvador. The debate, which was of an impromptu nature, had begun nearly an hour before, and honors were about even. Neither contestant had made any attempt to advance and neither had evidenced the intention of retreating. Warfare in Central America is a peculiar thing, and amusing when watched from a sufficient distance. The consul and his guest did not feel that their position was entirely favorable to the development of a sense of humor.

"Of course," observed the diplomat in the next intermission, "these greasers couldn't have selected any other place for their uprising. They had to interrupt the last proposal of marriage I shall have the chance to

make to you."

"It wasn't exactly an interrup-tion," the lady corrected. "I had just said 'no' for the second time."

"Well, I might have been able to ask you a third time before you took the train for Acajutla. Three is my lucky number. I was born on the fifteenth of March."

"I don't see what that has to do

with it.

"March is the third month in the year and fifteen is five times three. If I had put the matter to you on the way to the railroad station you don't know what your answer might have been."

"I can come near guessing. Why, you've known me only three weeks!"

"I told you three was my lucky number."

"And I wouldn't engage myself to any man with whom I had been acquainted for less than a month."

"Poor philosophy that, Mrs. Stew-

art. My opinion of matrimony is that in at least one essential it resembles a cold bath: the more quickly you take the plunge the less likely you are to suffer unpleasant results."

"Your opinion on the subject of matrimony doesn't concern me in the slightest," said Mrs. Stewart. "Any assurance you may have to give regarding the resistance that cotton wadding offers to bullets will be listened to with great interest."

"You may expect a practical test within a few minutes," replied the consul. "They are beginning again."

They were. The Federal troops made a sharp sally and actually succeeded in pushing their line to within twenty yards of the door of the con-"We're safer now," comsulate. mented the consul, when the report of the rifles and the shuffling of feet convinced him that this had occurred. "The mob will be aiming right at us. Thank God for Latin marksmanship!

A steel-covered projectile bored through the door and made a hole in a tin eagle hanging on the wall.

That's the emblem of the United States!" ejaculated the gentleman in "It's worth over five the bathtub. dollars! However, if they've got to choose between an emblem and an emissary when they insult the Government, they're welcome to take the emblem!"

"It is an insult, isn't it, Mr. Love?"

queried the lady.

"It is; and when we get out of here I'm going to make that patent-leather president sweat for it!"

"Up to this time," observed Mrs. Stewart, "we have done most of the sweating. I suppose you couldn't open one of those back windows?"

"You suppose correctly."

"I'd be very grateful. It's scarcely a step, and there isn't a breath of air

stirring."

"There are many other things stirring, Mrs. Stewart, including bullets, but I'm afraid I can't consent to be among them. The market price of consuls is too high."

"If you were half a man," Mrs. Stewart remarked indignantly, "you would throw back that blind."

"If you were half a woman," retaliated Mr. Love, "you wouldn't ask it."
"If I wanted to marry anybody I shouldn't decline to do whatever she

desired of me."

"If I didn't want to marry you I should take pleasure in granting your request. It is the improbability of doing the latter and still living to do the former that deters me. Low

bridge! There they go!"

Once more the little band of Government soldiers advanced, and still the rebels held out doggedly. According to the plan of their candidate, they were to create a diversion somewhere in the far end of the town while certain companies of Federal troops, whose allegiance had been purchased, gained pos session of the barracks. Then the expedition was to retire to this place of vantage, whence the business of subjugating the unpurchasable portion of the army might be carried on expeditiously. The forward movement took the regulars past the consulate, and there began to be longer rests in the score that the bullets had been drumming on the wall.

"The British consul laughed at me when I bought this tub," mused Mr. Love. "I don't believe in too frequent bathing, myself, but there are climates in which a good, thick tub is a great

blessing."

The young widow was silent.

"Still vexed with me?" inquired the consul amiably. "Well, you know, it's your own fault if I am only half a man. I've suggested the addition of a better half often enough."

"Mr. Love," quoth his companion, "when I think what it has cost me to say 'good-bye' to a poltroon who refuses to endanger himself one minute for my sake, I am furious with myself. But for you I should be comfortably seated in a railway train, knowing that every revolution of the car wheels brought me nearer to Acajutla, the steamer and the States."

"Not much nearer, Mrs. Stewart.

You can't conceive the slowness of Salvadorian railway trains. When it comes to revolutions, the army has their wheels simply lashed to the mast."

What might have been Mrs. Stewart's reply to this untimely persiflage is only conjecturable. At that instant a messenger mounted on a donkey rode up beside the commander of the insurgents and shouted: "No use! The soldiers have gone back to Rivas! Run!"

And run they did, as fast as their legs would carry them, the victors following at as much less than the same rate of speed as they thought would appear convincing.

The American consul rose stiffly from his tub and helped Mrs. Stewart to her feet.

"It's all right," he said. "By George, what a plucky little woman you are! You don't look a bit flustered. Still, you'd better have a pickme-up before you go."

"Thank you," answered the lady, with dignity, "but I think I'll go before I have a 'pick-me-up.' I'm afraid I've missed the train, as it is."

"That would be unfortunate," said Mr. Love. "If you will permit me, I'll carry your bag. I don't expect José back for twenty-four hours, at least."

Despite Mr. Love's expression of sympathy, he made no haste to get to the station, and when that place was reached at last the train had been gone

all of ten minutes. "It was due to leave at three," explained the agent. "It is now nearly five."

"And the steamer—the San Blas?"

"Ah, it is too sad! The San Blas sails immediately upon the arrival of the train."

"The next boat for 'Frisco isn't due for a fortnight," added the consul, an expansive triumph crowding into his voice. "At the end of that time you will have known me quite a month, Mrs. Stewart, and I shall do myself the honor of proposing to you for the third time. I believe I mentioned that three is my lucky number."

Mrs. Stewart turned toward him a face in which contempt and something approaching amusement were struggling for the mastery. There was only contempt in her tone, however, as she said: "Mr. Love, do you suppose for one instant that I would marry a man who declined to open a window for me simply because he thought that he might get hurt in doing so?"

Mr. Love laughed. "Oh," said he, "that wasn't the reason! I refused to open the window because, if I had, you would have seen how easily we could have got out the back way into a quiet street that led directly to where we now are. One can't count on Salvadorian railway trains leaving promptly, and I wanted very much that you should not catch this particular train."

Then Mrs. Stewart laughed, too.



A POSSIBILITY

MY love for you can never fail,"
He pleaded, in dismay.
She said: "I do not doubt your tale;
I know your love will never fail,
But then, your business may"

WALLACE D. JENNINGS.

A FORGOTTEN SONG

THIS song upon the time-worn page doth ring With that enchanted youth age takes away Forever from our hearts. The hand is clay Which wrote it long ago; yet the words sing, And the blithe beauty of it now doth bring Back to my heart remembrance of a day Whose happy hours rang with exuberant May—Eternal youth—the lyric cry of spring.

How meagre are the wages that we give
To those who write their thoughts out for our joy!
We give a little praise with its alloy
Of scorn; a little gold that they may live;
And then—forgetfulness; we know them not.
Poet, by me thy name be unforgot!

CARLTON CATTNACH FOWLER.



THE STILLY NIGHT

THE night after my wife went to visit her sister, over at Good Intent, and took the children with her," said the man with the thin, wan hair and retiring chin, "the house was so still that, as I sat out on the back porch with my feet cocked up on the railing—something, by the way, that I had almost got out of the notion of doing—I could hear the portrait of my wife's first husband, that was hanging on the north wall of the parlor, chuckling in a self-satisfied sort of way."



STRONG CONTRAST

I'M dreadfully excited," remarked the Thrilling Short Story to the Poem. "How are you?"

"Oh, I'm composed," was the Poem's reply.

A

MANY a man hides his virtues under a bushel to disguise the fact that he might have used a thimble.

THE ACTRESS THAT REMEMBERED

By Viola Roseboro'

HE managerial partners were consulting together about the cast of the new play. It was in the old days, fifteen, eighteen years ago-something like that-a long time in the theatrical world, a whole era as things have gone in New York. These were the managers of one of the old stock companies, Callahan and Golden -Jerry Callahan and A. Golden. Bets were sometimes offered on the Rialto-the south side of Union Square was counted as the Rialto then-as to whether the "A" stood for Abraham or Aaron, and some people cherished a tradition that Golden's patronymic in earlier, more obscure days had ended in "stein." A. Golden revealed nothing on these points. A. Golden was not given to revelations other than such as strictly forwarded his own business.

He and the Irishman, both in their shirt sleeves, Callahan smoking, faced each other now from their respective time-worn desks—the old theatre was too proud an institution to belittle its traditions with new office furniture. Amy Rintoul's case was under discussion; it was the only point in the business requiring discussion.

Amy Rintoul was the leading lady of the company, and had been for years, as most theatre-goers knew only too well. Don't we all keep tab on a popular actress's seasons of service, watching for the time to turn our thumbs down with something of the old cruel elation of the arena?

"I'd hate the worst in the world to go back on Amy," said Callahan. "Aw, damn it, the girl's that soft and tender—she never was fit for the rough sides of this business." Callahan threw his ashes toward a cuspidor with a vicious jerk.

Golden did not look up from the manicuring operations he was carefully conducting. "She's too old for Fillette." he said.

Callahan was big and red, and in his day had been good for a very pretty bout with the gloves, and even without them, on occasion, had administered chastisement to the injudicious. Now he looked sidewise across at his partner, doubled up a big hairy fist before him, looked at it and back again to the short, thick-set, leaden-skinned, silent man. The demonstration was for Callahan's own private satisfaction; he had no intention of distracting Golden from his toilet. Callahan was the head of the firm, but Golden was the coming man, and already far more powerful than his contract of partnership suggested. He "arrived" long ago, it may be mentioned, and for years past had dominated his world to a degree that more than justified Jerry Callahan's astuteness in taking him into the firm. After all, though it pleased him to double up his fist, Callahan did not quite forget now the reasoning that had led him to that

"You bet," he had said in philosophic generalization, "you bet there're good reasons why the Irish and the Jews are always pullin' off jobs together. And true for you it's not for the love they bear each other, either. But the Irish they furnish the blarney, for one thing; some Jews have plenty of that, too, but somehow the brand ain't popular. But the trou-

ble with the poor Mick is that with the best will in the world to deceive, it's always himself that's liable to be took in with his own soft soap—he gets to meanin' the half of what he says before he knows it. But a Jew partner, that's the trick every time! He's the boy whose feelin's are under control of the meter, and the pressure ain't apt to be heavy, either."

That was the way he had talked when he took Golden into partnership —Golden, who brought no capital but his curious special gifts for the business, and who already was becoming

a power.

So now after doubling his fist, Callahan returned to mere verbal

eloquence.

"You're after forgettin', I'm thinkin', how she pulled us out last year with that old skate, 'Fast Friends.' She was the youngest-lookin' leadin' woman in New York, and a fine thing for us that she was."

"Delia was romping young. That's easy, but Fillette's got to be a heroic child. That's hard for a middle-aged woman, and Rintoul never was heroic

that I ever heard of."

Golden spoke without color—stating facts colorlessly was his special, one might say his only form of conversation. He shut his knife now, rammed it into his trousers pocket, stretched out his short heavy legs before him and stared at his shoes. Perhaps he was remembering that they cost \$3.62. No one ever made very confident guesses as to what A. Golden was thinking.

He was not an example of the frequent good looks of his race. His features were as if molded out of dough, but his dull little gray eyes, once he turned them on yours, were not the eyes of a nobody. They don't describe well, but when you meet them all unaccountably it seems quite improbable that A. Golden feels as insignificant as you find you do yourself.

Did Callahan want his way? Doubtless, but had he not taken Golden to his managerial bosom for the express sake of his cold judgment on just such issues as this? Surely, but then you see it remained for Callahan to find out how fixed was this judgment against poor Amy Rintoul. And if it came to the question of Golden's business, it certainly was Callahan's view that a main part of it was to let himself, Callahan, out of as much dirty work as could be shouldered upon his friends. To fight against Amy's humiliation was a piece of self-indulgence. Golden would never let him pay too high.

"Who do you want for Fillette?" Callahan asked, after a sullen silence.

Counting Amy out, there certainly was no one in the company but Grace Gannon for the part. Golden was supposed by various talkative people to favor Grace Gannon. Now, despite a gleam in his dull eyes, he contented himself with simply speaking her name: "Grace Gannon."

"Lord, the girl's that green! Turn her loose in a field and the cows would eat her! She to play a French demoiselle!" But Callahan's tone was not the tone of repudiation; rather, it spoke

bitter acceptance.

"She'll whoop up the big scenes. The public don't care much about the finish. She'll do." Golden had just about so much pow-wowing to get through with on an occasion like this and he brought to it endless patience. Nevertheless, the last sentence was

spoken with a final accent.

"My public cares about finish, I can tell you," Callahan answered, with the irritable snap of a yielding opponent. The Irishman knew a good deal about acting and found the cultivation of it in his theatre pleasant. Golden, ugly and heavy and silent, knew more of the histrionic art than any Irishman this town ever saw; but there was nothing reckless in his attachment to it.

"The old companies will go to the wall," he said, "unless they learn to play down to the public, the big public."

Callahan got up and began filling his vest pocket with matches. Something one must call a snort was his only last protest. The meeting was adjourned with Golden victor. It was perfectly understood that Grace Gannon was to

play Fillette.

In those days we had more good acting than we have ever seen since, but our plays were mainly made in France and much deteriorated by the time they reached us. Sometimes "adapted" them; sometimes we only anglicized their language and, in the interests of propriety, eviscerated their situations. Callahan and Golden's new play, "A Daughter of Her Country," was an uncommon find, since no illicit love affair had to be manipulated to meet the American scruples of those ancient and curious times. The plot turned, to put it most baldly, on the exalted defiance of convention with which, in a strange crisis during the Franco-Prussian war, a young girl succors her country's soldiers. were good chances for the "whooping up" Grace Gannon's mechanical energy was sure to achieve.

The managers had not wasted breath discussing what Amy Rintoul would do with the part; they knew, or thought they did. Amy was exquisite; she would play it with a sincerity that is the rarest of merits in portraying any young girl; she would make this one's immolation of her convent-bred modesties most holy and touching in its rapt patriotism; but—but they had seen Amy play a great many young women, and her fire was not what even her worshipers praised. Golden had something on his side if he thought that here was a call for the genius that cuts the heartstrings; if the cry of the girl for France and the stricken sons of France could not do that, why, A. Golden was for youth and claptrap; oratorical points made with a club and by a pretty girl could count on a remunerative kind of popularity. It was the end of the season, the last of May. The parts would be given out for summer study. If Amy Rintoul "kicked" at being cast for the nun-the Sister had some excellent lines-why, she had the summer to make any arrangements she could, and the managers would have the same time for filling her place. Trust A.

Golden for springing his coup when he could not be stampeded.

Two days after the managerial conference Amy Rintoul woke slowly out of a late heavy sleep. She had lain awake most of the night; staring through the darkness she faced direful facts. Facing facts was an unaccustomed exercise. She cultivated the habit of illusions. She had a good head, had this charming woman, but she communicated with her intellectual perceptions as little as possible. Ugly truths were the one thing she hated; literally, the one thing. She was the softest creature! She forgave all manner of injuries; not "as a Christian," as Wanba was willing to do, but the very memory of them was drowned out in the outflow of her own boundless kindness. Lies, impositions, base schemes to injure, even-most wonderful of all-professional belittlement and professional triumphs over her, all these the offender could count on wiping out with a soft word. Above all he was safe if he would in any way call upon her generosity, appeal to her sympathy-borrow money of her, say. But the person who stated the disagreeable to Amy might wait long before he was taken into favor again, and any risk of a repetition of his offense was enough to make her always avoid him.

Yet it was characteristic that there alone in the night she at last looked the worst in the face, for her nature had many little used possibilities. had seen Grace Gannon that day, and in an instant she felt sure that Grace expected to play Fillette, and probably Grace had good grounds for her confidence. Amy was an actress by power of "making believe," and she had always made believe she was young. She had been considerably older than was generally known when, after her father's death, she went on the stage; so there was a margin for real deception, and she had taken advantage of it to the full. But in the mere interest of the agreeable, the agreeable to herself, she had gone far beyond the plausible in her assumptions. And yet, poor girl, you might say she was true to something more real than the years; for she was young by temperament—beautifully, fatally young. Except in rare moments when an unfamiliar Amy suddenly appeared on the scene, usually for decisive action, there seemed no possibility of maturity in her. All her successes were in markedly youthful parts. That had been for long intoxicatingly delightful, as time crept on defeated. But time was winning at last, and now, now what was to become of a woman who would be absurd as a "leading heavy," who could hope to do nothing above the commonplace in any part commensurate with her age?

It is a terrible thing to have been young so long, and to have all the sweetness of life, the life of the woman and the life of the artist bound up in youth. Oh, it is surely a good thing to have the gift of taking the seasons

as they come!

Amy had gone to sleep at last in a kind of passive, worn-out despair; the end of hope, seen in the deep night hours when the ameliorating common-places of life fall away, is a black end to stronger people than Amy Rintoul.

But she awoke to feelings more complicated. First, before consciousness was mastered there was that bitter groping which tortures the unhappy, as, coming out of sleep, they slowly take in all anew the height and depth of their undoing. But her miserable bewilderment was broken in upon by music that for an instant seemed divine and brought a tumult of emotion, high sorrow and deep joy, feelings fresh and noble, and far from this ugly cankerous suffering that had been gnawing her heart even in sleep. Then she was awake, and in the next room old Irish Ellen was singing softly, singing with her thread of a voice such a commonplace old tune. There is a generation that to its last representative on earth will never feel commonplace when they hear that song, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching!" The days, the days that are gone! the days when that old song was tuned to the throbs of a nation's hearts-high hearts, mad hearts, breaking hearts! What was it to Amy? What was she thinking as she lay and listened?

She came forth fresh and tranquil, "like a flower"—she was always being compared to a flower, even by people not habitually hyperbolical. These days she was as a flower that begins to wither if you scan it, yet remains still fair and sweet. Her mood was one of her reactions; she could hide away almost any trouble from herself for one hour and enjoy what the hour had to give. Now it was her breakfast, and the beauty of the morning, and the temperament that made any miracle she desired seem probable.

She overheard her mother and Ellen talking about tomorrow being Memorial Day. That was what had set Ellen singing war songs. Ellen had been in the family thirty years; she had known Mrs. Rintoul's brother, who was killed at Fort Donelson, and the nephew that died in Andersonville. She had had kin of her own in the Irish Brigade. She and Mrs. Rintoul always had quiet talks and little sacred journeyings between themselves as the commemorative day of the dead came around. Amy-well, Amy was always treated, and always treated them as one sympathizing with them from a distance, one who could, of course, do no better than that. Women can do wonderful things in living their fiction: marvelous artists in such kind are as common among them as blackberries. No turn of an evelash disturbed the front with which this feminine household lived out its complicated lies; though, naturally, facts as patent as a cat jumping out of a bag were bound sometimes to confront them. But they never blinked, not one of them.

This morning the new play was to be read to the company. After the reading the parts would be distributed; Fillette would go to Grace Gannon; disaster come upon Amy Rintoul? For there was scarce a question that Amy's professional standing would be forever altered, even irretrievably lost if she were defeated on the issue of

this part. Her mother, as they prepared to leave the house, watched her with anxious eyes, but Amy was gently, preoccupiedly inscrutable.

The reading took place on the stage, a daytime stage, deep in gloom, the house yawning black beyond. Over the stage manager's table down in front was a single yellow flare of gas. Most of the company were gathered and sitting or strolling about. Big Jerry Callahan, spruce and cleanshaven, moved among them like a jolly host, flattering and companionable. The day was warm, and he dwelt on the advantages of the stage for the gathering over greenroom or office. If the reading had been given as usual in crowded greenroom or offices one wonders whether it would have turned out so dramatic an occasion as it actually proved to be. On the stage they were all accustomed to loose the bands of their souls, and on the stage-stimulating fact-there was room enough to be effective. And if the occasion had been as tame as its program-? You may guess for yourself, when you have finished this story, how much difference that would have made to various people, Callahan and Golden among others.

A. Golden sat far back against the rear wall and watched and picked his teeth. There was a little stir of attention when Amy Rintoul entered, a graceful figure, with qualities of fashion and elegance and ladyhood. her came the little old mother, the simple, kind old gentlewoman. Mrs. Rintoul was very popular with the "profession" whom she never understood in the least. They were far from minding that-they were content to understand her, and they appreciatively studied her and her manners for professional purposes. The Rintouls belonged by birth and association to circles somewhat more distinguished, and also more conservative, than did most of Amy's professional associates. With the best will in the world and the most gracious tact, Amy was not always able to make her social quality either forgotten or forgiven. But for the old mother who stood in no one's way, who was so easily pleased, so delighted to please, they had only good will and sympathy. She was an uncommonly cheery old lady, but there was ground for the commiseration which, behind her back, the players expressed for her. There was no doubt that for Amy's sake she put unnatural checks on her conversation, was always on her guard in talking of the past lest she give Amy away. And she had come to the time of life when to talk of the past was an insistent need.

"You can't tell from Amy! She can put up a great front any time, can't she? But look at mama—I think they know the fat's in the fire." One actor expressed this view to another as the two observed the ladies.

Jerry Callahan greeted them gaily, bowed over Mrs. Rintoul's hand, and held Amy's. Amy turned one quick glance of scrutiny on him between her gracious little speeches. For that instant something very different from their usual soft sweetness, something sickeningly piteous, peered hurriedly out of her lovely blue eyes. Perhaps Jerry Callahan's bonhomie was a trifle strained.

One of the young men was still absent. Callahan swore a little under his breath, but no one took the delay hard. It was the end of the season, and this was a semi-social occasion without the strenuosity of a rehearsal. A group of the "principals" gathered about the stage manager, down by the gas jet. Golden strolled up and stood near. Unconsciously they were setting the stage for a brief improvisation that was to precede the reading of "A Daughter of Her Country."

"What are those stands for out in the square?" someone happened to ask.

"Tomorrow's Decoration Day," a man answered; adding, "awful bore when you have to run about town the way I shall tomorrow—cars blocked, brass blaring, horses frightened, children underfoot."

"I haven't anything to say against

the one holiday that does not mean a matinee." It was Callahan who, with a smile, gave out this popular sentiment; it was met now, however, with jeers, as being but a hollow mockery in a manager's mouth.

"Spare me the Fourth, and I'll for-

give the rest."

The little smart speeches were coming off briskly from one and another.

You'll be running about town tomorrow, I suppose, getting your rackets and your clothes and your novels together for your summer flitting?"
Amy Rintoul was speaking to the first complainant suavely, but with rather an odd emphasis.

"Particularly his clothes!" cried someone merrily, and there was a laugh at the expense of the dandy.

"Come to Canada for the Fourth," said a young Englishman to Grace Gannon; it was she who had especially prayed to be spared that one festival.

"I'd like to," she answered.

"Curious"—the Englishman was speaking in a smiling aside to Callahan -"curious how-well, how unsentimental the individual American is."

"Oh, we get tired talking off with our mouths sometimes." Callahan was at least not going to be patronized as a fellow-alien by an Englishman.

"The worst of war seems to be the holidays it creates." The cub of the company, a boy trying to appear a man and always anxious to please, contributed this effort at epigram.

He spoke just as Callahan gave his growl; the tone of the little god of their world arrested attention. They were all, all but Amy, trying to make out how he had snubbed their confrère, and there was a moment's silence. Across it cut Amy's voice with astonishing timbre and import:

I'm ashamed, ashamed of you all! Americans, scoffing at the Fourth, mocking the memorial of the dead!" Her voice broke, and she pressed her lips close to still their quivering.

Everyone was staring at her in amazement; her light veil was pushed back awry and her face was white but for the delicate spots of rouge that stood out now in telltale relief. Golden shifted his position to scrutinize her better; no one else moved.

Amy's voice came clear when she said quietly: "I could not stand here and say nothing. You must forgive me if I'm rude; but it's the dead, all those thousands and thousands and thousands of dead men in their soldiers' graves I remember." Her voice quavered again; evidently she had been too moved for an immediate resumption of a drawing-room man-

"Egg her on," said Golden in the

Englishman's ear.

"But, Miss Rintoul," he obediently and flippantly began, "patriotism is a selfish, narrow sentiment-"

Amy looked at him. "'And the worst of war," she quoted, "is the celebrations it inflicts upon us'! Child." she turned to Grace Gannon, and with a hand on the girl's arm was speaking for the first time in her life as an older to a younger woman, "you don't want to leave your country to get away from the Fourth of July." There was a pretense of talk among the others now, but they were all really intent on Amy in her novel phase. "It means things -oh, you must feel that! Gunpowder may not be very pleasant, but after all it is not so unfitting." She turned her eyes from Grace's shallow hard ones to the sympathetic face of Gates, the old comedian. "After all," she said, her voice growing tense again, "the smell and the sound of it have drenched a million Americans as they drew their last breath."

The whole company frankly gave her their attention again; they were all but ready to give her a round of applause—oh, no, not ironically. Actor folk are not cynical; they believe in emotion. They knew Amy; they saw how strangely she was exalted out of herself; they had some shrewd idea as to how, out of many emotions and a crucial strain, the mood had been

wrought.

Golden touched the Englishman's elbow; that young man began parrot-like again on his one note; as an improvising arguer he was not brilliant.

"But, Miss Rintoul, patriotism is all out of date; we should work for hu-

manity at large."

Grace Gannon took up the cue; she was going to play leading business and now was the time to compensate herself for her years of subservient tribute at Amy Rintoul's shrine.

"Oh, Amy is so old-fashioned," she cried, with artificial sweetness; "we're doing the country no harm, dear, though

we're not veterans of 1861."

Even the men, being actors, comprehended that a feminine dagger had struck deep. A curious instinct to dress the stage, to give the scene a fair chance, showed itself. Only Amy stood quite still.

"I happen to talk like a veteran,

Grace, because I am one!"

Amy held the house; she, too, now in this moment of tragic abandonment, showed the human instinct for the dramatic, inculcated by the training of a lifetime. She was simpler and sincerer than most of us Anglo-Saxons can be when putting our hearts into words.

"I can't expect you to feel as I do"-level and soft were her tones -"because, you see, I remember-I remember the war, from end to

end!"

All the rest were still and grave: the last minute had wrought a social miracle, and for a few seconds longer it was to seem natural that a human being should speak from her heart.

A sob sounded from the shadows;

it came from Amy's mother.

"We that remember are forever apart from you that have only heard. You and I know that, Mr. Gates. You fought for the South, and I saw my kin march away against you; but, oh, my God, it is we that remember who are united now! I was a great girl, thinking myself a young lady, when the kind lad who taught me to dance died at the first battle of Bull Run. At last let me stand with those who know what a country means. To you gentlemen"-she spoke with serious courtesy-"English and Irish and Hebrew, these memories of ours may be tiresome, but it even less becomes you to complain of our flags and our tears-

"Oh, Lord, Amy, I fought through three years of it under Francis Meagher!" It was Callahan pressing

toward her and almost pleading for absolution. "I'll march tomorrow, so help me, I will! It's this cursed show business that puts all the real things

out of a man's head!"

"I didn't know," said Amy, as she put her hand in his; "you can say what you like hereafter for all of me,

"You're the bravest yet, Amy." Their talk was private now in the midst of general interchange. "By St. Patrick's Day in the Morning, I'll stand by you, my girl, till the last gun's

Amy's exaltation was all gone; she

answered almost listlessly:

"I'll not hold you to that, Jerry. There's no use fighting too long. I was brave enough, and I fancy I've fallen on the field. Mother thinks so. See, she can't pull herself together. No, I can't see either, Jerry, any good reason why this should make any difference; but the world goes on bad reasons more often than not. Probably you've already fought for me in vain, and I was out of the running before I came. Don't say anything --never mind. I've known trouble was coming.'

She spoke at the last without looking at Callahan, and he gnawed his mustache in silence. His partner came near and Amy addressed him:

"Mr. Golden, I'm not fit to stay here-I've read the piece in the French, I-

"Certainly, Miss Rintoul," said A. Golden; "but let me get you your

part. Take that with you."

Amy sank into a chair, her dilated eyes following the Jew. This was the dreadful moment! Someone spoke to her; she did not hear him. Callahan went to the table with Golden.

The Irishman moistened his lips; he cleared his throat, but Golden spoke first.

"She'll make a great Fillette," he said, colorless as ever; "she's learned how today."

"And she'll remember! She'll make the most of the experience," whispered Callahan eagerly.

"Trust an old actress for that."

And A. Golden gave one of his semiannual gleams of a smile.

As Fillette, Amy outclassed all her former triumphs. She made a fortune for her managers, she was very happy, and her inborn faith that all would surely come right for her was justified to the last. For before a second season came around she died.



LES PAPILLONS NOIRS

JE vois autour de moi des ombres S'agiter désespérément; Elles sont lugubres et sombres Et sanglottent éperdument.

Elles ont des regards étranges; On dirait des miroirs profonds Qui reflètent l'âme des anges Ou l'amertume des démons.

Ce sont nos rêves, nos chimères; Et nos désirs inassouvis; Les regrets d'espoirs éphémères Qui trop tôt nous furent ravis.

Ce sont les intimes pensées Pleines d'impossibles vouloirs Qui viennent aux âmes blessées Où volent des papillons noirs.

A. LARCHER.



TO SECURE A HEARING

M INERVA sprang fully armed from the brain of Jove.

"Does this mean war?" asked one of the divinities timidly.

"Not at all," replied the goddess. "I am going to call a Peace Conference, and I merely want to be equipped so that folks will pay some attention to what I say."

BEHOLD THE BEAUTY MAN!

A. The state of th

By Kate Masterson

UNDREARY was the old type of dandy—unknown to children of a later growth. With the typical old maid—that fluttering, fainting thing—the bewhiskered fop of twenty-five years ago, his silk hat a trifle to one side, his step mincing, his eye ogling and his cane twirling, has stepped from prose and poesy into obscurity.

In real life we meet once in a while some silver-haired and, to our comprehension, overmannered relic of the old-time beau whose talk and whose walk are as much a part of him as the cavortings of a high school horse, and, oddly enough, there is pathos rather

than humor in the picture.

For the old beau was at least—heaven save the mark and forgive the term!—a gentleman, and the ruin is beautiful in its memory of lavender-scented, unstrenuous days. We feel that such old gentlemen, representing an era long gone by, should be placed in a conservatory with ivy grown about them to hide time's ravages and give strength to the crumbling clay.

Bunner's old beau, making his round of New Year calls at doors no longer open in greeting to friends, is one of the most charming studies in masculine old age of the former fashion. We have no such old men nowadays. They are playing polo or racing horses to avoid, rather than cultivate, the effete pleasures of modern society.

We became conscious long ago that a new girl had evolved. In place of the fluttering fair one who remained unwed, our time has brought forth the Girl Bachelor—the woman unafraid, whose curling-iron has been beaten into a latchkey, and whose weapon is a hatpin. Undaunted by mice or men—she can even look janitors in the eye—and independent of the cook, she turns out in her chafing-dish hygienic snacks from tinless cans.

Withal she is a woman; but she guards the secret deep, and its seeking and its finding prove a more fascinating diversion to the adventurous man than tiger-chasing or orchid-hunting used to be when women were more

tame.

But in place of the dandy—what? That hybrid growth, the dude, possessed no tithe of the masculinity, the debonair Lotharioism, the charm—for charm he had—of the old beau, who beneath his ruffled shirt front carried an unlimited good-fellowship and the joie de vivre of the bon vivant, another almost extinct type. The dude was largely collar and tie surmounting a tropic waistooat, his sex as indeterminate as that of a charlotte russe, his morale as innocent as a new-laid egg.

The Johnnie is only a name—an imported, English-labeled brand—as foreign to Americans as are all English jokes. The Football Man was never more than an automatic prunefed disappointment, once analyzed beneath his impressive make-up. He always wore his heroship as consciously as a matinee actor, until a great game degenerated into a grandstand show.

But, as the clean-cut, distinct woman arose from evolutionary flames, with a punching-bag instead of a powderpuff as her emblem, so has a new man arisen to the surface—not nobly planned, not good enough even as

a breakfast food for human nature. nevertheless, a type, a male Venus rising from the foam. Behold the

Beauty Man!

He came to fill the want that business makes in the life of the fashionable woman-husbandless most of the time because of stocks and bonds and things in Wall Street. A "parlor knight," some poet named him, but George Ade describes him as a "wrapholder." In Byron's time he was a cavalier servant; in London tea-rooms he is a tame cat-necessary as mosquitos-and men and women have grown to appreciate the place he fills so exquisitely. Other men might think it a poor task to purr at women's beaded feet through long afternoons, but who can say?

In this busy, dollar-digging age we are throwing out no nets for the stars -no, none of us! Our men must work that women may play-play, play! American men spend their lives in skyscraping torture chambers for money to build palaces on Newport rocks and sink Italian gardens in the red mud of New Jersey; and, in the pursuit of the golden fetich, which molders in their vaults, they become as overtrained and stale as the quivering half-back, plunging in the mud with one eye on the reporters' table and a grimy rubber bubble clasped to his

overflated chest.

Women have given over being amused with dogs. The most loved little beast in the bunch is no longer petted as it used to be. It has a dog-boy, a valet and visiting cards, but it occupies its place nowadays not because of its personality but because of its pedigree. Where once it was bathed in perfumed water it is now scrubbed with tar soap, for we have grown violently antiseptic of late, and we look for germs in the very hearts of roses and burn a little sulphur on our altars rather than incense.

On the seat of madame's victoria the Beauty Man is now as necessary as an overfed pug once was. It is a day of reckless driving, rampant automobiling and vicious cross-town cars. The little luncheons, the visit to the tailor's and the milliner's cannot be altogether manless. Sometimes husbands even flunk at dinners or the opera. The result is inevitable. Be-

hold the Beauty Man!

The Beauty Man toils not, neither does he sin. Mankind has grown to regard him with grateful trust. Everybody knows Jimmie or Tommie or Billie-who, dear boy, wears a bracelet and raises canaries in his flat. His Adonis-like appearance—clad well -is the beginning and end of him. His shape is his fortune; his face better than either his bond or his deed.

Called over a telephone, he answers like a bird, or as birds are popularly supposed to answer. Other men have to be dragged, cajoled, wheedled into putting on a dinner coat or doing a tea at their own homes. Not so the Beauty Man; he is gracious, ever ready, a grown-up Casabianca, who will not leave his post at the mast even at his

father's call.

The Beauty Man is invited out assiduously. You meet him even at smart funerals. He is as necessary to the appearance of a function as the candle shades or the potted plants. If he were absent from certain teas it would be deadly, as though the caterer had forgotten to leave the cream.

Gradually the knowledge of his social importance dawns on him, and he begins to keep a little book, in which he looks when he is asked to some house where he may not be quite sure if the sandwiches are from Sherry's or homemade—for this makes a gap in the exact cachet of a hostess and the ca-

pacity of her purse-clasp.

For it must be admitted that the Beauty Man, if he look forward to anything but the upbringing of his canaries, aspires to marry money-not necessarily a fortune, but enough to keep the wolf from the elevator. knows that beauty is a flower that perisheth, and that new and interesting men are being born every day among the bourgeois who go in for that sort of thing.

While his good looks remain, he may

go on making a social market of his superior valeting, but what when the rude winds of winter howl about the castle walls? The Beauty Man is, therefore, secretly nervous beneath his velvet exterior. He keeps a social notebook with records, weights and distances, and concentrates on his game with the clean scent of a spaniel.

Old ladies do much toward the continuance of the Beauty Man. The younger women of society are getting far too keen for soft dalliance, and are given to bridge and the great outdoors. The call of the bunker fills them with healthy aspiration to trudge over the savage grandeur of the links for five hours a day rather than to cultivate man as a footstool.

But older matrons, conservative ones so called, smile on the Beauty Man, and give him mythical positions with actual salaries, as social secretary and what-not, a combination that includes everything from boot-blacking to scalp treatment.

Truly, a sad story is that of a young woman who married one of these beauties, and with him attended the opera in the first glow of the bridal. Being somewhat over-temperamented, she went into supper later on with her Otho Cushing-spouse, fairly vibrating with that emotional insanity which proceeds from the blend of music and the acute perception we call love. As she sipped her bisque, wordless, she noticed a look of extreme agony crossing the Greek-goddy face of her lord. She bent soft-burning eyes upon him. Was he, perhaps, enduring some beautiful, soulful Parsifalic torture, rather than filled with the vulgar ecstasy which possessed her?

"That bally fool of a chef," he murmured, in answer to her questioning gaze, "has forgotten to put any onions

in the soup!"



THE BISHOP AND THE JUDGE

OH, when a bishop marries you, He makes two people glad; But when a judge divorces you, He makes four glad, by gad!

HAROLD MELBOURNE.



A DEFINITION

LITTLE CLARENCE (with the prying mind)—Pa, what is a tradition?

MR. CALLIPERS—A moss-grown lie, my son.



THERE is a good deal that might go without saying, but very little that does.

A NIGHT CITY

THIS monster of the myriad lights,
How manifold its mood o' nights;
Here pain and pleasure jostle free,
Meek Christliness and villainy,
Joyance and stern demand for bread,
The glittering and the better dead;
A weltering mass that seems to sway
Blindly, beneath God's starry way.

Is there some thread of plan to bind This curious web of humankind, And make it beautiful? These cries, That inarticulate take the skies, Have they their meaning and their song? What central fire impels the throng Up to some mount where Beauty sits, Or down to Shame's most shameful pits?

Look! 'midst the lights gleams forth the truth:
Whatso they do, whether in sooth
They seek Perfection, or are bent
On Mammon, or use devilment
That drags to hell, this seething world
Is by one Vision onward whirled,
And all yon tangle comes to this:
One huge and hungry hunt for Bliss!

RICHARD BURTON.



THE FORTUNATE CLIENT

FIRST LAWYER—Then your client got a verdict?

SECOND LAWYER—Yes; but he wouldn't if I had been on the jury.



BY NO MEANS!

MILLIE—Was it a quiet spot where you kissed Tillie? WILLIE—No, it was on the mouth!

A ROSE IN ICE

By Herbert D. Ward

The strident, pulmonary twang vibrated over the reporters' room, in which clouds of tobacco smoke swayed restlessly to and fro. The pulse of every man there waiting for an assignment beat quicker at the sound of the city editor's voice. John Worthley started as he used to do at the trainer's sharp command, hurried to his chief, and stood respectfully before the desk. John was six feet three, weighed two hundred and thirty pounds, and had not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon him. For three years he had played centre rush on the Yale 'Varsity, and nearly eight months of exasperating reportorial work on the Daily Magnet had not whitewashed his ruddy cheeks nor softened his iron muscles. As he stood with an eager air of deference beside his chief he looked exactly like a huge, overgrown schoolboy waiting for wisdom to spurt from the lips of an anemic, undersized schoolmaster, whose lungs had revolted at the atmosphere he knew not how to leave.

John Worthley was generally assigned to prizefights and to those sporting events which seem to be the necessity and are the bane of a great city. Few suspected that Worthley's soul aspired to the more dignified work of a newspaper office. Football fame and bulk he inwardly detested. He would give anything to change figures and places with the city editor, for instance, whom he could as easily have picked up and throttled as a mastiff might a toy spaniel.

On the other hand, the city editor envied Worthley his youth, his strength

and his future, and perhaps he showed it a little in the wistful twitching of his eyes as he looked up at the giant before him, whom he was in the habit of ordering as no housewife dares order her cook.

"Look here, Worthley," he began, "do you know anything about dogs?" John's face lighted with the joy of

one who loves and understands dogs

as you do friends.

"Try me!" he answered concisely. Words were not wasted in that office. The city editor nodded and looked his "sub" over with good-natured jealousy, as he had done a hundred times before.

"Then you go and cover the Dog Show. It begins tomorrow, and I want it thoroughly done. Be particular about the Boston terriers and the Russian wolfhounds. Slash the judges all you can, and steer the artist your own way." He turned to his desk, for he had finished the subject; but John remained standing.

"I can do the dogs all right"-John spoke in honest fear-"but I'm no good on the society act."

The city editor did not look up at the Titan's troubled face.

"Don't worry about that," he said, with a faint smile. "I've assigned the gush and clothes to an expert. You cover the dogs. That's all you have to do."

With a deferential "Thank you, sir," John took his dismissal and proceeded to look up the last year's files of the paper to see how much space and how many pictures he would be allowed. He had become too wise to ask elementary questions. His whole training had been to obey, and to do

it with his mouth tight.

At nine o'clock the next morning John Worthley swung up to Madison Square Garden; he looked like a modern Hercules. A three-mile walk from his uptown boarding-house had brought the hard, ruddy color to his cheeks, and his eyes sparkled like stars on a frosty night. He was the kind of a man whom matinee girls rave about. Why, for three years he had been the object of that sort of adulation which sensitive, hothouse women lavish upon brute force, and yet there was nothing gentler in the brute creation than John Worthley, who shrank from the fluttering sex as a woman does from a mouse. He understood men and how to push and drive and smash them, if necessary. But a woman! Heaven protect him from an encounter!

For a moment or so John stopped at the Fourth avenue entrance, watching the dogs arrive. Big dogs, little dogs, hairy dogs, smooth dogs, cross dogs, gentle dogs—dogs in crates, and dogs in arms and at the leash, were ushered in to take their places in the

great and yappy show.

As he stood there absorbed in this passing canine pageant a smart brougham drove up, drawn by a pair of over-checked, foaming bays and topped by a plum-colored coachman and footman with rosettes in their beavers. The carriage came to a nervous halt right where John was standing. The footman jumped lightly for the door. The horses were so highly checked that they were in torture, and danced restlessly in the keen air as the driver brought them sharply up with the curb to keep them from plunging. John's coat was flecked with foam, and his gentle heart was disgusted at this cruel, fashionable exhibit. Instinctively his eyes turned to the occupants of the carriage, for he wondered who they might be. As he did so he encountered a haughty stare from the most beautiful eyes he had ever seen in his life. It was the kind of a look that brushed him away as if he had been a fly. It was an expression that

can only be successfully cultivated by those who by their birth, their position and their wealth are absolutely unassailable.

She was that type of carmine brunette whose jet hair and oriental coloring seem as much out of place in our bleak climate as an orange blossom in Labrador. But her red lips pressed proudly together, her dark eyes haughtily controlled, her ample furs producing an impression of warmth that her manner declined—these proclaimed that her nature belied her type and was in harmony with the cutting atmosphere. In her arms lay one of those toy ruby spaniels that thrive only upon love and luxury.

"Elise"—the young patrician spoke to her maid opposite—"give Johnson the cage. There! You step out and take the little darling. Don't let him

down for your life!"

Somewhat abashed and greatly amused, John Worthley turned aside so as not to intrude into the sacred process of introducing another pampered pet into the toy department of the Dog Show. Just as the maid stepped out and was in the act of receiving the ulstered spaniel in her arms, the horses reared, and the coachman brought his whip smartly down upon their necks to steady them. At the touch of the lash they gave an impatient leap ahead.

Elise!" cried the girl in horror, aroused from her cold composure -"the precious!" The carriage bounded a few feet ahead, and the dog, balanced at that instant between the four eager hands, fell between them with an agonizing squeal, dropped upon the sidewalk and rolled helplessly into the gutter. In the horror of the situation the French maid turned away with a shriek and put her hands to her face, expecting the helpless spaniel to be run over at the next instant. Instinctively the footman gave the open carriage door a bang as the horses jumped, thus imprisoning his mistress.

But John Worthley leaped for the dog. In that preliminary struggle when the horses were backing and prancing, measuring their ability to bolt against the pitiless curb, the dog crouched, terrified and helpless, awaiting its doom. John had made many a desperate plunge through centre, but none quicker than this dart for the dog. He was not too soon, for he caught the little thing by its ulster just as the wheels were upon it. Then—for he was trained to think in a rush—he tucked the dog into the breast of his overcoat, and in three steps was at the head of the plunging pair.

"Put that whip down, you fool!" he yelled at the coachman. "Now loose those reins!" With a firm hand at each bit he was easily master of the

situation.

John Worthley was triumphant and angry as he quieted the maddened horses. He did not hear the carriage door open nor the swish of approaching skirts.

"Curse these curbs, and confound these overhead checks!" he said aloud to himself. "They ought to be stopped

by law!"
"Sir!"

John still stood in the half-frozen mud, each hand caressing the snorting nostrils of the pacified pair and lingering near enough to the bits in order to hold control. From under his neck, like a huge scarfpin, the tiny ruby spaniel blinked and wondered. John turned and looked at the lady boldly. He was so stimulated by the quick battle that he forgot his usual fear in the presence of a woman, and he regarded the girl sternly.

"Will you please give me my dog?" she asked, with flushed hauteur.

"It's a confounded shame to check horses up like this and then curb them in besides. I should think that anyone who likes dogs——"

"Sirl" interrupted the young lady, with a freezing look, "you have my

dog."

"Oh, Miss Rosalind—" The maid ran up. "It was not my fault—the gentleman saved Bijou's life."

The young lady's lips quivered a little, but her eyes did not soften. She would never in all her life forgive that stranger his rebuke. No one could suspect from her manner that her heart beat one whit the faster when she took the shivering spaniel from his hand.

"I thank you for your service." She dismissed him as if he had been a

menial.

But John lifted his hat and turned his back upon her. He was puzzled at the conflicting sensations that warred within him. As he passed into the Garden, easily towering above all other men, he still wondered at himself. That was the kind of a woman who would either arouse the demon or the angel in him. Was that icy manner herself? Or was it a mask to cover a heart as passionate, as tender as his own? He smiled indulgently. "What's the odds?" he thought. shall never see the witch again, anyhow." Then he opened the catalogue and turned to the ruby spaniel class. Passing his fine eyes down the short list, he soon came to the following announcement:

Bijou-Miss Rosalind Van Twiller.

The reporter looked into space with

a vacant, dazed expression.

Why, that must be the only daughter of old Van Twiller, president of the City National and three-quarters owner of the paper on which he worked! He had often heard of Rosalind. Who in New York had not? He remembered that she had been pointed out to him at his last Harvard-Yale game, in which he had made the winning run. She was famed as the coldest, haughtiest girl in the circle in which she was easily the most beautiful, if not one of the richest and most unapproachable. And now, after risking his life for her pet, he had only been rewarded by her eminent stare.

John's heart burned with indignation within him. He clenched his hands. All the diffidence that he had hitherto felt toward women seemed to vanish with his anger at the girl who was so bereft of the finer feelings that belonged to the womanhood he worshiped. He felt as if he could do something brutal if he had a chance,

if only to shock her into a human expression. But the contest between them, if it should come, would be too unequal. If she were only a man-a centre rush! But she was a womana glacier! With a fine, independent toss of his head, he thrust her beautiful insolence out of his mind and turned to caress the dogs he loved-dogs who responded to every touch of his tender

hand with eager delight.

That afternoon he would proceed to make the aristocratic Boston terriers seem like mongrels to the reading public and to degrade the imperial wolfhounds to the peasant class—that is, if he honestly could. John had spent the previous evening in the public library looking up these breeds, and he felt, in the flush of newly acquired knowledge, that he could give points to the best experts in the sawdust ring.

He had finished his inspection of the effete Boston terriers and was now devoting his whole attention to the magnificent representatives of the noblest race of dogs that civilization has as yet produced. There was the intelligence of a collie, the speed of a deerhound and the strength of a wolf! These Borzois were indeed offspring of the untamed steppes, he thought, when his name was called by a voice that he had not heard for many a weary, plodding month.

"John, old boy, I am perfectly delighted to see you. Where have you

kept yourself, old chap?"

John Worthley turned with his lithe motion and grasped his classmate's hand; he gave it a squeeze that made his friend wince with pain. The joy that each felt in the discovery of the other broke down all barriers between them. The newcomer, the product of generations of pampered ease, was dressed in the height of Dog Show fashion; the tip of his silk hat reached barely to the rough giant's chin. Perhaps the best part of a college education is the fact that the two classes, the rich and the poor-those that otherwise might never have come into contact-meet on a common ground and learn to appreciate each other, not as heirs but as men. Elisha Tailer had become a millionaire at his father's death, which occurred before he had left college, and he was now one of the leaders of the "Four Hundred." cotillion was complete without him. He and John, as opposite as lead and radium, had been devoted friends at college, and this was the first time they had met since graduation.

"How's your game, old man?" Elisha punched his hero playfully in the ribs. "Dine with me tonight and

tell me what you are doing."

John Worthley laughed in the wholesouled way that had won him a lasting college popularity which he little realized. "Oh, I'm only a reporter. Dogs today-prizefights tomorrow. I'm on the Magnet.'

"By Jove!" Elisha shouted. "You don't say! Why, this is luck! I must introduce-

John Worthley looked up and around. Direct and plunging, according to his nature, he had seen nothing but his classmate; but now his eyes encountered-

"Miss Van Twiller, allow me-" Elisha Tailer began in his most formal manner-"allow me to present to you my classmate, Mr. Worthley. John, Miss Van Twiller has often seen you and admired you for the last three years. She has told me so herself."

But John was looking straight into the lady's black eyes. A curious selfpossession and coldness that was always his during a great game held him now. It was as if he were before an antagonist and every sense must be alert. He felt no diffidence. He felt more alive than he had since he had bidden good-bye to the great gridiron.

He bowed coldly, and after a surcharged silence turned back to his classmate and then allowed a smile to creep over his mouth. But the lady bit her lips slightly and clutched her fingers in her muff. Science is making great strides, and some day a professor will arise and tell us that icicles have feelings, especially when the sun shines.

"I say, old man"-Elisha turned on the two, looking from one to the other with intimate intuition-"you two act as if you had met each other before and-

"Elisha Tailer"—a cold voice cut his sentence in two-"you are an exceedingly impertinent young man, and I can dispense with you for-for-

Elisha gave a long, low whistle; he looked from Rosalind's cold face into John's impenetrable one. Then a smile, both tender and insufferable, invaded his own countenance.

"I see — well, good-bye, my children." He lifted his daintily gloved hand affectionately up to John's rough shoulder.

"I say, Rose"-he looked up at the girl mockingly—"this time you're up against the real thing. I don't believe there's a woman in the world that Worthley would give an inch to if he will make up his mind to buck the line."

Then, with an exaggerated and courtly bow, his silk hat almost swept the sawdust and young Tailer was gone.

John Worthley looked straight at the Russian wolfhounds. He was thinking mightily. He would not speak first. He would rather die. The girl regarded the giant mockingly. Her eyes measured his gentleness, his strength-his will. In the silence her expression grew hard and then soft. It was the eternal conflict of summer and winter-heart and habit. Then a voice that seemed to proceed from another woman said:

"Don't you want to come and be formally introduced to Bijou, Mr. Worthley?"

John turned as if the ball had just been put into play. Was she a woman or a cold storage warehouse for all human emotion? He looked down into her face as if he were judging her fate instead of his own. There was a fluttering droop of the eyelids-and an evanescent flush under her rich dark skin. These signs made his heart beat violently.

"Yes," he said gravely, "I should

like to come."

"I think," said the lady, with an amused twinkle in her black eyes, "that I have seen you several times before, although I ought to forget it, for you were very rude to me about the

horses—don't you think so?"
"Where?" John asked John asked naively. Then he added, "I couldn't help it. I am sorry. It made me furious to see horses checked up like that-so cruel and so useless."

"Is it? I never thought of it before. I have always let the coachman do as he pleased."
"I am glad you think of it now,"

bravely.

"What would you say if I forgave you, and told you that they should never be checked so again?"

"I should say that I misjudged you." John looked down with racing blood, but the cold glance that he encountered staggered him. He had much to learn about a woman's sleight of heart. "Where did you see me before?" he managed to stammer, with pardonable curiosity. They passed up

the stairs to the side gallery.
"Oh—" The girl hesitated as if trying to recall the circumstance with difficulty. "At the last Harvard game in New Haven. Let me see-didn't you make a forty-yard run through centre to the first yard line?"

"I have a dim recollection of something of the kind." John's cheek burned at the memory of that great day when Yale won out. His muscles instinctively tightened.

"And then," proceeded the girl non-chalantly, although her dark color proclaimed a little enthusiasm, "don't you remember the year before at Harvard when you stopped that run a foot from the goal, and they didn't gain an inch, and lost the ball on three downs? That was splendid. I love Yale."

"Do you?" asked John innocently. "Why, so do I. Isn't that strange? I didn't suppose you could love any-

Just at that moment, when he thought he had a bond of union, she stopped before a little ruby spaniel who was sleeping away the long hours of separation from his home.

"Bijou! Oh, you darling! Sit up. Make a smoke face! I love Bijou, sir.'

The little red dog, mad with delight at seeing his mistress, barked shrilly, and then sitting up on his haunches drew his lips apart, showing his teeth in the most grotesque of smiles. John laughed heartily.

"What a funny little dog!" he said, trying his best to compliment. "I never had a little dog. I wouldn't know what to do with it. I should be

afraid of its getting lost."

"Papa taught him the smoke smile by blowing tobacco in his face," explained Miss Van Twiller. "We couldn't lose him. The maid never leaves him out of her sight. Bijou is more nuisance than a baby. I couldn't live without him. He is the only creature that entertains me. Aren't you, Bijou?"

The pampered dog gave his mistress

a look of idiotic content.

John sighed and regarded the dog jealously. Such a girl who loved a dog so devotedly could have a heart for —he dared not finish the thought.

"There!" she said. "You have seen Bijou. Do you think that his blue ribbon is becoming to him? I know you are busy. Now make your bow to the first prize ruby and I won't keep you any more."

"Can't I—just a little while?"

pleaded the reporter eagerly.

The young lady flashed on him a slow, mocking smile. "Not—not to-

dav."

But John Worthley recovered himself. He gave his new acquaintance a proud, formal bow, turned his back sturdily and went his way. If he had been ill-bred enough to turn he would have surprised a young lady's eyes following his stalwart figure wistfully.

John Worthley walked on springs. The Dog Show, his first really important assignment, was over, and the city editor had been pleased to say that he had done quite well. Such praise, rare in an office where sentiment plays no part in the distribution of salaries, meant a speedy advancement, if he could only keep the pace. He had swept the Boston ter-

rier off the face of the earth, he had raised the wolfhound to the canine pinnacle on which the imperial race belonged, and he had slashed with a virulent pen the unfortunate judges who did not deem a shrinking, cuddling red toy spaniel called Bijou worthy of the first prize in the ruby class. And now there had come to him in consequence of this excellent work an assignment that pleased him greatly, and that made him the envy of the young corps of reporters of which he was junior.

Every autumn the Dog Show is followed by an epidemic of dog stealing. Valuable dogs that have been catalogued are decoyed, snatched, kidnapped and held for ransom by dog banditti, who crawl by day and hide by night. To John Worthley his paper had given the task of running these snatchers to their kennels and deliv-

ering them up to justice.

"It will be dangerous," said the city editor gravely. "The police won't touch it; but I guess," glancing up at the young man's massive figure, "you'll pull through all right."

John Worthley rejoiced in his mission. Here was a chance for him to use all the brains, all the adroitness and presence of mind that he possessed. He was to be a detective and an avenger. He would rather have been assigned to the laboratories that carve and torture dogs alive in the name of "scientific achievement." But this was better than nothing, and he threw his whole heart into his new and perilous duty.

John Worthley had imagination as well as heart. Of all the animals in the world the dog is the only one that has voluntarily linked its fate to man. It is the only animal that loves man. It loves him as a god. The dog offers up its soul at the feet of the king it adores. Like a woman, but with more exclusiveness and singleness of heart, its love is its life. So, to deprive a dog of his home is to inflict a cruelty that exceeds almost any other of which the mind can conceive. To take a dog into one's life is to assume a re-

sponsibility the import of which we too seldom realize. The child grows and goes. But the dog stays and grows old in our service. This service is that of love that flows into our hearts as eagerly as a river flows into the sea. It is a love that adapts itself to all our moods, that rejoices in the little it receives, compared with which its own gift is as a year to a day. It is a love that forgives all disappointments and inattention, that waits all day for the master's footstep and the chance of kissing his hand, that has repressed all instincts and most desires for the sake of the idol to whom its life is devoted. I use the word "devoted" in a religious sense, for nuns and monks immured in cells have not cut themselves more utterly off from their world for the sake of their God than the dog has for his.

Now, to snatch that creature, all heart and all love, suddenly from his home and the objects of his affection is a demoniac act, and there is no punishment that can fit such a crime. Supposing—and here John Worthley's heart hammered at the thought-that Bijou-tender, adoring little red spaniel, whose heart was a dozen times too large for its curly body-should be seized from its silken bed by one of these dog banditti and immured in some den alone, among rough, woolly strangers who threatened and whipped and swore-why, the torture the little creature would suffer would be equal to that when, if unanesthetized, it were placed upon an operating table and its nerves torn to pieces.

So John put on his roughest clothes, and an old blue sweater with a big white "Y" on it of which he was pardonably vain, and which had never been trailed in the dirt of defeat, and strode on his mission, looking, for all the world, like a great, hulking laborer seeking employment. Underneath the lapel of his vest he had his reportorial badge hidden for an emergency. It was the only weapon he carried. He looked grimly at his huge fists, and smiled in the consciousness of his

strength.

"You might look-" replied the captain commanding the Italian district to John's confidential inquiry. "If not there, try-" continued the officer politely. "There's plenty of them dog-catchers that do a howling trade. We can't bother with them without a special complaint or the boss gives us the tip. See!" with a broad wink which spelled "graft" to the initiated.

With the confidence of youth, and with the-courage that four years of Yale training is bound to give to an athlete, John walked up to the darkest and the most dangerous Italian tenement in the city of New York.

At the end of a blind alley the monstrous building reeled. Within its caverns seven hundred submerged souls groped for shelter, where there was room for only a bare hundred. All the nameless odors of filth and crime and disease assailed the clean white man as he entered the pitiless den. John Worthley had made up his plan to pose as a poor medical student seeking to get dogs to vivisect by those subterranean means so well known to laboratory workers. In the narrow black hallway, where breathing already seemed almost a physical impossibility to healthy lungs, he was stopped by a group of foreigners. In an open doorway a crone, who looked like a lost Fate, stood silhouetted against a forbidding background; she had a murderous expression, half smile, half scowl. The men stopped their gabbling and leered at the stranger threateningly. John didn't lose his presence of mind in these surroundings. He advanced a step, and held out both his palms with what he considered a true Oriental gesture of peace, and said, "Amico," not knowing what language he was uttering.

Whatta want?" asked the foremost of the group, relaxing his scowls

a little.

"Dog," John answered, with a friendly smile; then, remembering his Latin, "canis," he said, and stood, looking intelligent.

The three men narrowly searched

John's face and then exchanged inquiring glances with the lost Fate.
"Ah," said the spokesman, with a

cunning leer, "dogga. Whatta for?"

"Hospital," John Worthley replied in as offhand a way as he could, lighting a cigarette for protection. "Bellevue Hospital, savvy? Have a

cigarette?"

Each took a cigarette, and each face lighted as it puffed. John now executed a master-stroke by offering one to the lost Fate. This she graciously accepted, and unknotted her tangled features. Nine times out of ten tobacco will accomplish what no other bribe can. You may suspect a

dollar bill, but not nicotine.

The men now formed a circle and began to speak and gesticulate furiously. John watched them with an amused smile, not noticing that the lost Fate was dissecting him with the intentness of a fortune-teller. They were evidently disputing as to whom they should recommend. They pointed up—they pointed down. Their cigarettes and their dispute died away at the same time. The spokesman beckoned John with his black claws.

"Comma," he said. The three shuffled ahead. The lost Fate scowled

after them.

John Worthley followed close. The light grew dimmer. The atmosphere was suffocating. In the dark he noted his way as well as he could, and unconsciously his great fists clutched themselves and his teeth gritted as he dogged his guides to the lair he

sought.

The word "hole" can convey no adequate conception of the den into which John finally stepped. It was a sort of sub-basement, a cavern, an oubliette, from which no sound could filtrate and into which no light could glimmer. A suspended ship's lantern emitted murky rays that were engulfed long before they reached the serrated limit of the cavern's walls. John stood with his back to the ladder by which he had descended. Foul animal odors, the noxious, overbreathed air, the dampness that chilled by reason of its fatality rather than because of its temperature, fantastic shapes that slunk into the dimness and then stalked into obscurityall these and more had to be quickly comprehended by a mind that was beginning to appreciate the danger of its undertaking. Why, a minute ago his lungs were full and his ears tingling with the clang of imperative electric gongs; but now he had passed into an eclipse as if the world and all its life and beauty had never been. Most other men would have experienced a corresponding mental adumbration. But the veteran football player had been trained to alertness. The raucous gabble of the men who would murder for their gain as easily as you would snatch a peanut from a stand in passing, punctuated by the halfsmothered growls of unseen creatures, only put the reporter upon all the mettle he had.

His guides had awakened the demon of this den, who seemed to be more abject as well as more naturalized than his companions. This man took down the lantern, held it by John's head, inspected him jealously up and down, and then uttered a sigh of disappointment at the signs of poverty.
"You come from medical?"

Tohn nodded.

"You want dog-how many?"

"Can you deliver ten tomorrow at the Bellevue Hospital?"

The bandit's eyes gleamed avariciously.

"At night. About-eleven. Ten

dogs, two dollars each."

"All right," John nodded. "I want to see them. Perhaps I'll take one now if it's small enough. I've just got two dollars left." He opened his coat, exhibited a chainless vest and drew out a crumpled bill from where the watch ought to have been.

With an exaggerated gesture of deference the Italian led the way to the edge of the cavern, which reluctantly resolved itself into a series of compartments in each of which a poor dog was bound. Upon their paliets of damp, fetid straw the creatures blinked and recoiled as their demon approached. John Worthley's heart now began to beat furiously with indignation and with pity. Many of the dogs, in spite of their being dirty and unkempt, showed all the marks of high breeding and a tender home. Their waiting eyes looked up into his face with piteous hope, only to be dashed into despair. John made no sign of his feelings. For the first time in his life he felt within him the capacity for murder. His ears were humming peril-

ously. From the black corner of the cave, as they approached it, John heard a cry that might have come from a baby's throat. It was as if a soul were pleading to be released from the Inferno. In the increasing light John saw an exquisite little toy ruby spaniel sitting up on its hind legs and pleading as if its heart were broken; tears were running down from its great brown eyes. John's heart gave a great leap. knew the dog at once. He knew it by its familiar attitude, by the dingy blue ribbon at its throat, by its peculiar collar and by its braided leather leash. In an instant he had bent down, untied the frightened creature, and had raised it to his shoulder with its head under his chin. Then he bent and whispered in the dog's ear:

"Don't you know me, Bijou? Want to go home? I'll take you home."

For answer the pet spaniel, not weighing over three pounds in body, but with a thousand pounds of love concentrated in its little life, uttered the cry of the found—the sound to which only a thief or a vivisector could listen without tears.

But the four Italians crept nearer to the intruder with dark and menacing scowls. And as they closed about him the little red dog clung with desperate claws to his savior's rough coat, pleading for his life.

"I'll take this one," said John, in as easy a manner as possible. "Here's your two dollars."

"No, no," hissed the demon of the den; "this special dog. Hold for ransom. Getta hundred dollars today.

Ver' valuable dog!" He stretched out his arm to grasp the clinging creature.

But the old football player had experience in fending off attacks with a half sweep of his free right hand. He held the wee dog as he would the leathern disk he loved so well and made a break for the ladder, the pack of four after him. At the foot of it he stood and held the maddened banditti at bay. In their eves he saw the volcanic murder he knew had only been temporarily slumbering. In the murky gleam he saw stilettos flash. His back was against the rounds, and upon his bosom the little victim pleaded piteously. How strong he felt! How glad he was to be alive! Every nerve tingled with the joy of the fight. Like a midsummer's madness the picture of a beautiful face flashed across his retina. It was as if it were a rich, human Jacqueminot that for an instant shut out the snarling faces before him. If she only knew-would she be a rose in ice to him, as she was to the rest of the world-haughty, disdainful, proachable? It seemed impossible that he could be torn to pieces by these curs for her.

It was not a long fight, but it was a glorious one. At the very onset John felt a hot sting upon his shoulder. This new sensation unlimbered him. It took but a second's time to tuck the toy spaniel within his coat, as he had done once before, and so free his left hand. He thought of the Indian who, with the ball placed within his sweater, made the most sensational touchdown of the season, and all the while his ears could hear the quarter-back repeating mystic numbers while his hands moved like piston strokes.

"You hounds, you!" he kept repeating to himself as he smashed the wavering line. Before he realized it the two remaining men had scattered into the darkness, swearing horribly. It took him but an instant to dart again to the ladder, when the den was plunged in darkness. Then, for the first time, he felt something warm glue his underclothes to his body, and he began to be a little dizzy.

Up he climbed as fast as he could. There was a clutch upon his leg. He gave a vicious kick that was followed by a groan. Again that hot sting, this time within his leg. With a cry he burst open the trap and staggered down the black corridor. He was in the basement. He found the stairs and ran up panting. Behind there was a scuffle of feet that, to his singing ears, sounded like gigantic cockroaches.

Before the outside door that led to liberty the lost Fate stood barring the exit. There was no time for chivalry. Behind, the feet clattered closer and raucous shouts waked the tenement to the intrusion. Taking the hag by the throat John swung the woman behind him like a stone from a catapult and flung her down the narrow passageway into the faces of his pursuers, and thus, for the moment, blocked their advance. A knife whirred by his ear and passed humming into the rotten panel of the door.

But John Worthley, bleeding above and below, with one leap, such as he used to make when "bucking the line," plunged bodily through the door, and dashed down the blind alley into

the protecting street.

There a carriage was drawn up. It looked strangely familiar. The unchecked bays no longer pranced, but stood in dignified and comfortable expectancy. As John lunged on the door opened. It took but a glance to recognize the lady of his dreams.

"Quick!" he cried; "they are follow-

ing me!"

"Mr. Worthley! Why, Mr. Worth-

"Here's your dog; here's Bijou. I promised him I would save him."

John lurched forward, and a frightful pallor took possession of his ruddy face. Above his collar a red spot grew in intensity.

Then Miss Rosalind Van Twiller woke up. She stretched out a daintily gloved hand and took the young man

forcibly by the arm.

"Get in," she commanded, vibrant with anxiety. To the coachman she cried with all the force she could command: "Burton, whip those horses up! Home!"

When she turned back from the window she saw a little red face peeping out from beneath a rough overcoat that lay strangely still on the seat beside her. For the first time in his life John Worthley had fainted.

John Worthley stared out of the broad window into the Park. He lay in a luxurious invalid's chair, one arm and one leg bandaged so that he could hardly stir. It was the third day since he had lost consciousness, and he was unutterably ashamed of himself.

"To think of my getting stuck here in her father's house! What will she think of me? I've lost that scoop—the city editor will fire me sure." Such gloomy thoughts, interrupted now and then by twitches of pain, had taken all the joy out of John's life. He had never been laid up before, and he was taking it hard, as a perfect animal should.

There was a faint scratching at the door of this Van Twiller guest-room, and a little creature pushed its way in. It came prancing in, wriggling its stubby tail, and with yelps of joy leaped up and began kissing the invalid's face

madly.

"Oh, you rat, you! You dear little red rat, you!" exclaimed John, overjoyed at this demonstration. Then the ruby spaniel jumped down, scampered all around the room, and disappeared through the door with a bark of ecstasy. John drew a long sigh of regret. He was beginning to get very With the exception of a whitedull. capped trained nurse, he had seen only the dog and the doctor since he had come to; and once or twice he thought he heard a swish of skirts outside his "What an ass she must think I am!" he kept repeating bitterly.

And now the sound of approaching voices came through the open door to ears made keen by pain and

waiting.

"So you think he can stand it, doctor? An extra excitement, you know."
"Oh, yes. He'll be out in a week."

"You say he's a pretty good man on the paper?"

John's pulse tingled; for the answer came in the city editor's sharp, im-

perious voice.

"None better. He's the most promising man we've got. I don't believe there's another one in the city that would have got out of that den alive. It was a big scoop for the paper. The men are all locked up, awaiting Worthley's recovery to be convicted."

"I guess we'll have to do something

for him, then."

"You can't shove him too far to suit me. He's——"

"'Sh!"

The three men approached the door and came in, followed by the nurse, who bustled ostentatiously.

The eldest of the three walked right up and stood over the reporter, and looked at him with critical kindliness.

"So this is the young man who saved

Rosalind's dog!"

"Worthley, you haven't met Mr. Van Twiller yet"—the city editor waved his hand introductorily.

"I'm sorry-" John began to stam-

mer.

"Not another word, Mr. Worthley!" Van Twiller put his hand gently on his guest's free shoulder. "We are all under very great obligations to you. The Magnet is proud of you. All you have to do is to hurry up and get well. There is a little niche waiting for you when you get back—isn't that so?"

The city editor nodded with a suspicion of moisture in his wary eyes.

There was a timid knock on the door.

"May I come in, papa?",

Caught unawares, John Worthley found himself blushing furiously. Mr. Van Twiller noticed the sudden glow, and it cannot be denied that an ominous pang went through his heart.

"Certainly, my daughter; this is our guest's reception hour. Come

right in."

As the young lady glided in, holding the ruby spaniel affectionately in her arms, the city editor and the doctor exchanged glances, stepped aside, and quietly slipped out.

"I have had no chance to thank you. What can I say?" She paused in unprecedented embarrassment.

"We've saved the dog, anyway,"

John answered stupidly.

"I was just going to ransom him, you know. I went alone. I didn't

want anybody to know."

Mr. Van Twiller opened his lips to speak. This was one of the moments when he remembered that he had a motherless girl. Rosalind needed a good scolding, but he saved himself just in time from administering this in the presence of the young man. Instead, he regarded the two very closely.

"But you ransomed me!" John blurted out, devouring her beautiful face with unmasked eagerness.

Van Twiller looked at his naive employee—this young man with football in his brawn and the making of a great editor in his brain. The newspaper proprietor remembered his own struggling youth. "Poor," he thought; "but he's a man, anyhow."

There was an obsequious knock at the door. "There's a message for you on the wire, sir. The butler told me to hurry, sir." The picturesque

maid softly withdrew.

"You'll have to excuse me," said Van Twiller. "I must leave you for a few moments to my daughter's hospitality."

As the magnate passed out the nurse, with the tact of her profession, was busy at the other end of the great

room.

"Miss Van Twiller"—John's heart gave a great leap as he spoke—"I'm sorry I've been such a nuisance. I would do it all over again for your dog!" Somehow these remarks did not seem idiotic to either of the two young people.

"You almost gave your life," said the girl in a very low voice. "When I think of it—" then she broke off.

Her color came and went in a series of beautiful transformations. The two looked at each other and for a long moment did not speak. Then John abruptly said: "Have you ever seen 'A Bit of Old Chelsea'?"
"Why?" asked Rosalind. "Yes—"

then she paled.

"Well, you see," John stumbled on, "somehow I couldn't think of you from the very first time I saw you as a 'white-faced, stand-off lady.' I know that is what you pretend to be. I don't think it is what you are. You are so womanly—you are so you!" John stopped and breathed hard.

"Once," he continued very slowly,
"I went past a florist's window
where I saw a cake of ice. In it lay

a rose—a Jacqueminot."

Still the girl did not answer.

"It was alive and sweet," persisted

John. "I wanted that rose. I want it now."

Rosalind turned away from the window and looked the wounded man straight in his eager eyes.

"I wish to be to you," she whispered, with great solemnity, "what

you think I am."

"Oh, I am so glad—so glad!" In his great weakness and in his great joy John's lips trembled like a boy's.

But now the nurse came up. "He mustn't talk any more now," she said.

"Then I will read to you," said Rosalind. "What shall I read?" "Read?" John asked happily.

"Read me the 'Sonnets from the Portuguese."

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THE OCEAN LINER

Like some bewildered monster of the deep,
Groping to freedom through the baffling tide,
She blunders forth, while nuzzling at her side
The bustling harbor craft about her creep.
Anon she feels her iron pulses leap,
And, symbol of the age's mastering pride,
Looks out to where the ocean stretches wide,
Scorning the fears that in its mystery sleep.

All day with headlong and undoubting haste,
And all the night upon her path she flames
Like some weird shape from olden errantry;
And when some wafted wanderer of the waste
A storm-worn pennant dips afar, proclaims
With raucous voice her strong supremacy.

P. McARTHUR.



SUCCESSFUL

STELLA—Was her marriage a failure?

Bella—No, indeed; the alimony paid one hundred cents on the dollar.

A MEAN MAN

'HERE is no use talking," said Mrs. Winkleton, "this room has got to be completely done over."

They were sitting in the front reception-room as they spoke, on their way

upstairs from their dinner, and had stopped for a moment to rest.

"Yes," said Winkleton; "I suppose that's so. If you give that progressive euchre party next month that you are talking about I suppose you will want the place to look nice. Still-

With the caution induced by a married career of some years' standing Winkleton now began to feel that he had perhaps gone too far toward a possible

"Still, perhaps, we had better wait until the fall."

Mrs. Winkleton was an obedient and economical wife.

"Well, dear," she said meekly, "if you think we can't afford it we'll have to get along."

She arose and glanced somewhat critically and sadly around the room. paper did show signs of wear. Two of the chairs needed re-covering. Then, it

was rather bare. It needed another piece of furniture.

Winkleton had unconsciously arisen, and his own glance followed that of his wife. And then an impulse came over him, a kind of flood of extravagance that sometimes a wife's very meekness engenders. He would have the room fixed over. His wife was going away on a visit for a week. During her absence he would have it done, to surprise her. His eye glistened with sudden joy. But his experience prompted him to find out just how Mrs. Winkleton would have the room done. With a simulated air of resignation he said:

"Well, my dear, I suppose we shall have to wait. But it's rather nice to think of what could be done with this room, isn't it? Now, suppose we were

going ahead to fix it up-just what would you do?"

Mrs. Winkleton turned decisively. There was no doubt in her mind; she had thought it all out.

"Why," she said, "I would have a plain paper—you know that shade in the Smiths' front room? Well, like that; with a cream-tinted ceiling. Then I would move the molding up, and have it a gilt with a very fine stripe. This chair I would take out. The others I would have re-covered with about the same pattern as they have at present. Then I would get a new tête-à-tête—you remember that old-fashioned one we saw one day at Flumsey's—like that."

Winkleton made a mental note of the total changes required, and the next day his wife had hardly time to get on the train before he was on his way to the upholsterer's. From thence he went to the decorator's, and then to the furniture dealer's. In the short week that followed-a week full of joy for Winkleton in anticipation of his wife's delight—the transformation was complete, and the room was exactly as if the lady of the house had superintended the matter herself. Winkleton could scarcely wait for her home-coming. Finally, however, the train rolled into the station. Once more they clasped hands. Winkleton trembled with excitement.

"My dear," he whispered, when they were on the horse-car, "I have a lit-

tle surprise for you."

A look of suspicion came into Mrs. Winkleton's eyes. Her face fell. She had been surprised before by her husband, and always dreaded such things.

"Oh," she exclaimed. "What is it? Are you sure I will like it?"
"I know it!" exclaimed Winkleton. "This time I have done the right thing.

They entered the house.

Winkleton preceded her, and stood dramatically in the door of the receptionroom.

"Prepare yourself," he cried proudly.

Mrs. Winkleton entered, gave one look, and burst into tears. "I shall never forgive you for this!" she sobbed.

Her dumfounded husband, wholly at a loss, gazed at her in amazement.

"Never forgive me!" he repeated. "Why, isn't this just the way you wanted it?"

Mrs. Winkleton, partially recovering, looked at him, in her eyes a whole

world of reproach.

"Yes," she said, "of course it is. Why shouldn't it be? But you've cheated me out of it! You horrid, mean old thing, don't you know that for months I've just looked forward to the pleasure of ordering all those things myself?"

TOM MASSON



ISS SANDFORD-Yes, Mr. Fielder, I will be yours on one condition. FIELDER-Oh, that's all right. I entered Harvard with six.



THE TRUTHFUL SPIRIT

WELL," snapped Saint Peter, "what have you to say for yourself?"
"I am not a good man," replied the applicant; "but I didn't go about making apologies for myself on earth, and I don't intend to begin now.' And he got in.



UNWILLING TO BE A MARTYR

O you believe in tipping waiters?"
"No, but I have an aversion to going hungry."

A FINAL ACCORD

By W. J. Henderson

ERR DOVITZENIA sighed and stroked his mustache softly with a delicate Paderewski He had just finished playing the C sharp minor prelude of Chopin, the one which Niecks thought was so much like an improvisation and which Huneker declared was not for the multitude. It had a charm inexpressible for Dovitzenia. Perhaps he was captivated by the beautiful modulation from C sharp minor to D flat and back again. He could have told, but he would not. What was the use? The beautiful women who always flocked undulatory and ruffling at the receptions of Mrs. Healy Horner, matron-in-general to musical genius, stood about him four deep and breathed incense upon him. So he sighed and patiently stroked his mustache, waiting for the end. Then he would revenge himself by playing one of Liszt's "Études Transcendantes.'

"Herr Dovitzenia," murmured Florence Furbish, the pianiste from across the river "your technic is amazing"

the river, "your technic is amazing."
"Yes? You are so amiable. Thank

you."

"Herr Dovitzenia," said Mrs. Folsomby Flinn, the amateur from the Bronx, "if I could play like that I would give ten years of my life."

"I gave more than that," responded

Dovitzenia sententiously.

"Oh, divinity of imperial sound! Sweet accords of unutterable thoughts! They set my being to new harmonies."

It was Olive Madison, whom Dovitzenia could not understand. Olive Madison was tall and willowy and looked much like one of those girls that all good magazine artists draw when they wish to idealize society. Her eyes were a soft gray and they seemed to peer beyond the prose deeds of today and to fix themselves on the poetry of the distant future. Dovitzenia had seen her first at a reception in a home of Sunday paper culture, piano arrangements of Wagner and framed etchings. Then she began to go to his recitals. She went to all of them and sat where she could look up into his face with the poetry-of-the-

future grav eves.

At first it troubled Dovitzenia; but presently he observed that she never carried any scores and seemed to be totally oblivious of his dropped notes. Then he began to like it. He studied her face, which was worth studying. He said to himself that it was a song without words, which was untrue, for she talked often and copiously, with a fine outpour of adjectives. Now Dovitzenia was gazing down into the gray eye of the far distant prospect while a strange little thrill, such as he had never before felt, glowed softly along his spine.

"Is it that I am troubled with a cold, or have I caught a temperament?" he asked himself. Then he

answered Olive Madison.

"You enjoyed the prelude, yes? I am enraptured."

He continued gently to stroke the mustache and to look far away.

"Enjoy!" she exclaimed. "It was more than joy—it was transport. I shall write of it later."

It was this which troubled him. Miss Madison was a poet. She would write about his playing in sonnets and ballades and even in triolets. He did not know what she meant, and the triolets were very hard to endure. The sonnets he bore with some fortitude, for they plainly meant nothing at all, so far as he could see; but the triolets were so little and so innocentlooking that they actually appeared to be truthful, yet he could make nothing of them, either. And he knew English well enough to know that Miss Madison was unique in her rhymes. She was even Gilbertian at times, but Dovitzenia did not know that.

"You will write, yes? It will be

adorable!"

He did not seem to be much moved. but she was shaken with a storm of emotion when he said her poem would be adorable. The gray eyes stopped peering into the future and came back to the present with sudden rich sunny fires in them. Then the lids fell over them, like the curtain descending on the flaming of Walhalla in the last act

of "Götterdämmerung."

The whole room was watching them. Florence Furbish, the pianiste from across the river, thought that Miss Madison's conduct was altogether too clever in its technic. Mrs. Folsomby Flinn, the Bronx amateur, declared to her secret self that the artful minx was endeavoring to ensnare the greatest pianist of the age, who should live for his art alone. Mrs. Folsomby Flinn was thirty-seven and had a husband in the wholesale grocery business. As the women fell back gradually and left the two standing together, Carol Browne, the little musical critic, who had learned two words of Polish on purpose to speak them to a famous prima donna, and was now awaiting his opportunity to say them to the pianist, murmured to Marie Whittaker, the female 'cellist, who was suffering from housemaid's knee and could not take any engagements:

"Isn't it a pity that young woman doesn't play a fiddle or a flute or something, so that she could appear at his concerts? They look well together, don't you think?"

"If she played anything, it would be a cornet," snapped Miss Whittaker, who would have loved dearly to play the Saint-Saens sonata with Dovitzenia.

"Yes," sighed Olive Madison, "I shall write. I do not know what it will be, but I shall strive to put into mere words the emotions which you pour through that prelude. You express the universal and eternal overthought."

Dovitzenia stroked his mustache. He had been brought up on Hanslick and denied the power of music to express emotion. To him it was nothing but beautiful arabesques of sound. It meant nothing. But his technic was indeed wonderful and his tone was so

melting.

When he met Olive again it was in the artist's room after one of his recitals. He had played a wonderful program and had added two Liszt fantasies and the Rubinstein C major étude as encore numbers. The wo-men had crowded down to the stage and had stood worshiping his devitalized wrists as they rapped out the staccati of the Russian's German music. He had felt nothing in that music but the cleverness of its suitability to the piano. Probably Rubinstein himself felt nothing more. Olive, who had not crowded with the other women, but had stood in a medieval pose in a side aisle, whither she had retreated from her front seat in order to be alone with her dreams, had perceived vast vistas of vanishing mysteries in the étude. She came now to Dovitzenia and proffered him a slip of paper. Well he knew what he was to expect. He shuddered almost imperceptibly as he took it.

"You need not read it now," she said. "When you are alone in your study smell white rose, strike the chord of A flat major, and then read it. I wrote it yesterday, but today I perceived that the thought was prophetic. It is the mighty C major étude of Rubinstein played by the mightier Dovitzenia."

Then she slipped away in the writhing mass of adulators.

When Dovitzenia was alone at home

he took the piece of paper from his pocket and read this:

Snow, steppes, and the step of the hound! Shadows of steeds and of riders that sit to the saddle:

Strokes of the arrow that shiver and make no sound.

Swash of the swirling canoe and the paddle. Dark as the tremor of hate and the liquor of

Bare as the brow of a hill that is ever in winter,

Halcyon colors of yore and cerulean temples above.

Master and molder of men, superlative tinter,

Thine is the victory, bought with our breath, Striker of tones ever mellow and fluty, Magic divine of dear love and of death

Above and below in the halo of beauty.

Dovitzenia shook his head, stroked his mustache and sighed.

"Is it that I love her? Yes?" he reflected. "It must be that. Something affects me. It must be temperament, and temperament is akin to love."

The next day he went to call on Olive. She had asked him several times to do so, but he had always found some way to avoid it. Now he went anxiously. She was at home, and there were no other visitors. She took care that there should be none.

She was in an ecstasy.
"Did you read it?" she asked.
"Yes," he answered. "For that I read it I have come here. It sent me."

Olive trembled. She hardly knew

what to say to him.

"Is it that you have affected me strangely, Miss Madison? Yes? I am desolate for words to tell you. You do not know my language. I know yours little. Still, I can say I love you. Is it that this troubles me? Yes? So I tell you."

Olive could not speak.

"Is it that you are angered?" he

"Oh, no!" she responded, with a sudden upward flash of her wonderful gray eyes.

Dovitzenia leaned forward and took

"Then we are to be husband and wife? Yes?"

"Oh, Jan, to be the wife of such a great genius!"

And then she fairly fell upon his neck. He kissed her ardently, for he had some of that kind of temperament. Presently he said to her:

"After we are married you shall teach me to understand your beautiful

verses."

Olive stared with a frightened look in her gray eyes.

"But you understand them now, do

you not?" she said.

"No, it is that your muse is too subtle. I follow not her furthest flight. You must teach me."

Olive gazed at him helplessly, her hands falling limp in her lap. She turned pale and trembled.

"What is it, my angel?" he asked. "My hour of punishment is here," she said.

"Punishment? Why punishment for you, fairest?"

"Oh, Jan, I must confess! I, too, do not know what my poems mean!" He looked at her as if he thought

she had taken leave of her senses. "You do not know? And I do not

know. How shall they be explained to me?" "They cannot be explained. They

They are

never meant anything. there, they are there!"

The girl's voice rose to a kind of sob. "They stand between us," she cried, "the shrieking evidences of my duplicity! They are like the ghosts in Macbeth.' They will not down!"

"Calm yourself, angel of distraction," said Dovitzenia, taking her hand in his. "Why shall we not let these poems stand unexplained, like the beautiful riddles of the Sphinx?"

"No, no!" she wailed; "I cannot do that. They would haunt me."

"Then you shall tell me why you wrote them."

She covered her face with her hands

as she confessed.

"All the women rhapsodize about your music, Jan. Their talk seemed to me so silly, so prosaic. I tried to write in my verses something that would seem to you to-to-to mean just what your music seemed to mean—I mean ought to have seemed to mean—to me."

Dovitzenia caught her in his arms

and kissed her passionately.

"Angel of my soul!" he exclaimed rapturously. "And you could not find any meaning in it?"

"No," she sobbed.

"We shall be so happy," he said.
"Oh, Jan, you are so forgiving!"
"I have nothing to forgive soul

"I have nothing to forgive, soul of my soul. I, too, do not know what my music means, and I am rejoiced to believe that it does not mean any-thing."

"Oh, Jan," she murmured, "then we are both esthetic impostors!"

"Is it not so?" he replied cheerfully.
"Yes, it is true. We shall be most happy. We shall live in perfect ac-

cord, like a major third."

And so they were married. And Dovitzenia continued to hypnotize the women, while Olive kept his fingers in repair and never went to bed till she had audited the box-office returns with a magnifying-glass.



HE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS LEADING UP TO

CLARA—Are you a fatalist?
CALLER—Yes, but don't make a Welsh rabbit.



EXPERT

REGGIE—Have you your motor perfectly under control?

Bertie—When I take a girl out into the country for dinner I can always break it down in front of a cheap table d'hôte place.



THE NOVEL READER

"Not very well. Maybe I skipped the plot."



WIFE—I am having all my dinner frocks made décolleté.

Perfectbrute—Then no one will accuse us of locking the family skeleton in the closet.

CLAVERING AND HIS DAUGHTER

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By Foxcroft Davis

Author of "Despotism and Democracy"

THE return of a woman once married to a home under her father's roof is always a tragic episode. It implies death or disaster and means the giving up of the prestige and independence a woman is supposed to attain by marriage. It may be the most sordid or the most dignified of tragedies that brings her back. Nevertheless it is a tragedy, and almost invariably has its sordid aspects, because it is oftenest poverty, to the accompaniment of divorce or death, which leads her, wounded and smarting and hungering, to that last remaining ref-

the ried followered william and applied beauty

uge-her father's house.

To Elizabeth Darrell, on the gloomy October day when she reached Washington from England, it seemed as if all the cruel reasons which ever brought a woman to such a pass existed in her case. She had pondered over all the sources of her unhappiness with that curious passion for the analysis of their own misfortunes which is peculiar to women and poets. Her general and specific quarrel against fate had not been absent for a moment from her memory since she first undertook that long journey overseas. As every hour brought her nearer to her old home the pain and the apprehension of pain increased. One mitigation she had hoped for—the sight of her father's kind, handsome old face as soon as she reached Washington; his courtly placing of his hand within her own; his valiant pretense that her home-coming was a happy one. But her despatch on leaving the steamer had not arrived in time, and when she reached the station there was no one to meet her.

It was a cool, damp autumn afternoon; a fine rain was falling and a general air of misery brooded over everything. With that dazed intelligence about places which were once well known but are now half forgotten, Elizabeth watched the streets and squares through which her cab rolled. She was forced to observe that Washington had become a fine city in the ten years since she had seen it. But, accustomed to the crowded thoroughfares of European cities, the quiet streets seemed to her dreary and deserted be-yond expression. Was everybody dead in those silent, handsome houses? The cab stopped at last before a tall, plain house in the northwest, quite far out. The finer residences were crowding the poor house in an unseemly manner. Elizabeth remembered it as surrounded by vacant lots, tenanted only by real estate agents' signs. Now the region was well and handsomely built up. The house, commonplace and shabby, looked still more commonplace and shabby from its fashionable surroundings. It was near the end of the square, where the smaller street debouched into a splendid avenue. On the corner was a fine white stone house with an entrance on the avenue and a porte-cochère on the side street.

It made Elizabeth Darrell feel more of a forlorn stranger than ever when she saw the new luxury that surrounded her father's poor old house. She descended from the cab and with a falter-

ing hand rang the bell.

Her ring was answered by a negro woman, stout, elderly and decent, but far removed from the smart English maids to whom Elizabeth had been long accustomed. However, so strong is early habitude that the sight of this honest black face gave Elizabeth the first sentiment of home she had felt since her widowhood. In that black face was a dog-like softness and kindness, and in the voice a compassionate yet deprecatory quality, which is not heard often in any but an African voice. "You is Mis' 'Lizbeth," she said

kindly, holding the door wide. "De gin'l, he war'n' lookin' fer you 'twell tomorrer—but come right in heah."

There were signs of preparation within, but the room designed for Elizabeth—the best bedroom in the house—was not ready. Serena—for so she informed Elizabeth was her name—was full of humble, soft apologies.

"De gin'l will be mighty worried dat he war'n' home when you come he was countin' on meckin' you mighty

comfortable."

To which Elizabeth, her spirit dying within her at the aspect of things, answered:

"Is not the front bedroom in the third story furnished? Perhaps I

could go there."

Serena eagerly led the way. It was the room which had been Elizabeth's ten years ago. She had chosen it because General Brandon was always entertaining some of his relations, and had the old-time idea that hospitality to a guest meant the upsetting of all family arrangements; so Elizabeth had chosen this upper room for her own, secure in not being turned out of it to accommodate some ex-Confederate general, judge or other person distinguished in "our great Civil War," as General Brandon always spoke of it. The windows had a good outlook upon the blue Potomac and on the misty line of the Virginia hills far beyond. Otherwise it had not a single recommendation.

Serena, her honest heart in her beady black eyes, was all sympathy and attention. She brought tea, called Elizabeth "honey" and talked in her slow and soothing voice of "de gin'l." Evidently General Brandon was a hero to his maid-of-all-work.

At last Serena went out, and Elizabeth was alone. She sat down before the little dressing-table and removed her widow's bonnet and veil. And remembering that when she had last seen herself in that mirror she had been a bride and in the glory of her youth, she could not but study the changes in herself She had then been beautiful, in a vivid, irregular manner, and ought to have been so still, as she was but little past her thirtieth birthday. But she saw plainly that she was haggard, that she was sallow, that she was painfully thin. She looked at her own reflection with self-pity, thinking: "I should be handsome still if I had but some flesh and color, and if life were not so hard and disappointing."

She sat a long while, leaning her head on her hand, and seeing, in the mirror, not her own reflection, but the hapless story of her own life passing before her. Then, recalling herself, like a person waking from a dream, she went to the window and looked out upon the quiet street. It was already dusk, and the mist of the late autumn afternoon made mysterious shadows, through which the houses

loomed large and near.

Directly before her towered the great stone house, and just above the porte-cochère was a large square window, with delicate lace draperies. It was quite dark enough for the wood fire, sparkling in the white-tiled fireplace, to show the interior of the room, which was evidently a boudoir of the most beautiful and luxurious charac-Elizabeth was keen of sight, and she could not refrain from looking into so charming a room placed under her eyes. The walls were paneled with flowered silk: the furniture was of gold and spindle-legged; there was a delicious little sofa drawn up to the fire: everything spoke of wealth informed by taste. And in a minute more the mistress of this delightful room entered-a graceful, girlish figure, enveloped in a long, full cloak of a shimmering, silvery satin and wearing a flower-decked white hat.

She threw aside her cloak and sat down for a moment on the sofa before the fire. Her air was not that of happy abandon, but rather of thoughtfulness, even of sadness. She was not beautiful, but Elizabeth, with a woman's ready appraisement of another woman's charm, saw at a glance that this girl's appearance was interesting. Her features were delicate. but her face was too pale for beauty: her thin-lipped mouth was large, though redeemed by perfect teeth; but her air, her figure, her walk, were full of grace and elegance. She remained only a few minutes in the room, then passed into the inner room and closed the door after her. And in a moment a maid came in and drew the silk curtains, leaving only a rosy glow from the window instead of a captivating picture.

Elizabeth, distracted for only a little while from her own thoughts, went back to the sad employment of casting up her sorrows and disappointments. She remembered her childhood on the old Virginia plantation with her father's mother. The war was not many years past then, and over all her early life hung that great black shadow of chaos following defeat, the wreck of fortune, the upheaval of society, the helplessness, the despair of millions of people, with their whole social fabric a wreck, all values destroyed, everything disrupted and out of joint. Her father, General Brandon, had been one of the number of ex-Confederates who sought service under the Khedive of Egypt. General Brandon spent ten years in Egypt, and then, the regime of Ismail being over, returned to America. He had stinted himself in every way during his Egyptian service for the benefit of the little dark-eyed girl on the Virginia plantation, and magnanimously invested his savings in Egyptian bonds. He still had the bonds, but as neither interest nor principal had been paid, or was likely to be paid, General Brandon was as poor when he reached America as he

had been when he left it.

He was a West Point graduate, and had been the best loved man in his class, in spite of having been also the handsomest and one of the dullest. So when his old classmates in the army heard of his straits they all agreed that "something must be done for Dick Brandon." Although a West Point man, he was not a scientific man; he was too handsome to know much. His old friends did the best they could for him by getting him a clerkship in Washington, and General Brandon, who had commanded a brigade of fighting men during four years of unremitting warfare, found himself subject to a chief of division young enough to be his son and as ignorant as men are made.

General Brandon bore his lot with a fine patience and a sweet calmness that placed him well up in the ranks of unrecorded heroes. He had a superb courage, a charming temper; he remained incurably handsome, and likewise he was and always remained incurably simple in every way. Anybody could hoodwink him, and most people did. He came to Washington, bringing with him his daughter Elizabeth, then eighteen; and, some remnant of property coming to him, he bought the shabby house, or rather thought he bought it, for it had a heavy mortgage on it, which General Brandon never had the least expectation of lifting-mortgages being as natural to Virginians as sparks flying

Washington, in those days, was a simple, merry, happy-go-lucky place, with a delightful and unique society, based upon official rank and a few old resident families, who were in society when Abigail Adams had the clothes dried in the East Room of the White

House.

Elizabeth was a great belle with gay

young army and navy men and sprigs of diplomats and was not unhappy, although she felt at every turn the prick of poverty. She was ashamed to complain, however, in the presence of General Brandon's cheerful submission. He had his compensations, though, chiefly his evening visits to and from other grizzled officers, of both sides, when they sat and talked gravely and tensely of issues as dead as Julius Cæsar, and solemnly discussed what might have been, to an accompaniment of whisky and cigars. General Brandon's whisky and cigars were poor -he smoked a pipe himself, declaring he preferred it. But no army man of any rank ever animadverted on the general's whisky or cigars, and although both were evilly cheap they drank and smoked cheerfully, with a relish for the man if not for his entertainment.

General Brandon had no knowledge of the words "getting on in society," or anything like them. He belonged to that sturdy oligarchy in Virginia which, whatever might be its shortcomings, knew nothing of snobs or snobbery, because everybody was just as good as everybody else. But his social career had been such that the newly rich might have asked him his patent for knowing everybody worth

knowing.

He was asked everywhere in those days, which he took as a matter of course, just as, during his occasional brief sojourns in England during his Egyptian days, he was asked everywhere and took it as a matter of course. Your true Virginian has many faults and some vices, but he is socially the wisest person in the world because he is the simplest. Nobody can patronize him, nobody can snub him. He takes the notice of royalty with the same unconscious ease that he does the rapturous salutation of a negro barber who belonged to him "befo' de war, sir"-always polite, considerate, mindful of the small, sweet courtesies of life. There is but one section of society with which he cannot get on. This is the newly rich smart set, fresh from

the forge, the shop, the mine, the liquor saloon—that rapid and splendid fungus which has grown up in America during the last forty years, of which it has been said that no parallel exists to its license and irresponsibility, unless one goes back to the later Roman and Byzantine emperors. This class is free with a freedom that is staggering to contemplate; free from any traditions of the past, any responsibility in the present, any accountability to the future; free to marry, to be divorced, to live where it likes, to change its residence every week in the year; free from the care of the few children they have. free from taxes as far as rank perjury goes, and free to command all the science of the world to keep death at bay as long as possible. The advent of this class anywhere changes the aspect of things, and therefore when it moved in columns upon Washington the peo-ple of General Brandon's class and Elizabeth's time became "cave-dwellers" and General Brandon was asked "nowhere"; that is, he was still asked, but it was "nowhere." The general, however, didn't know this at the time. or ever afterward.

Meanwhile, before the transformation in Washington was complete, Elizabeth had met her fate at a ball at the British legation, as it was in those days. The man was Captain Jack Darrell, of a crack lancer regiment, the grandson of a peer as poor almost as General Brandon. Darrell was handsome, simple-hearted, brave; was, in short, remarkably like General Brandon in character. After he had danced at a few balls with Elizabeth and had called on her four or five times, he concluded that she was necessary to his happiness and told her so. Elizabeth was swept into his arms by a genuine gust of passion, and they were married almost before they knew it. The giving up of his only child was a hard blow to General Brandon, but he bore it as best he might and dowered Elizabeth with his Egyptian bonds—which

was all he had to give her.
So Elizabeth had a very gay, impromptu wedding in Washington and

sailed soon after for India, where her husband's regiment was stationed, and was counted to have made a perfect love match.

But there was another man—only Elizabeth did not find it out until too late. This was the cousin, the chum, the brother officer and the traveling companion of Darrell—Captain Hugh Pelham, a dark, thin, homely man, with more brains in his ugly head than a dozen handsome Darrells could boast.

Elizabeth met the two men at the same time and both fell in love with her; but, as the case often is, the fool rushed in where the wise man feared to tread. The news of Elizabeth's engagement to Darrell came as a bolt out of the blue to Pelham, but he bore his disappointment as a brave and magnanimous man should. He was best man at the wedding, and he and Darrell having the same leave and the same station, he went back to India with the newly married couple and saw Elizabeth every day of his life.

Anglo-Indian life has its dangers, and Pelham, realizing the risks ahead of a woman as young, as beautiful, as innocent and untrained as Elizabeth, with no better guardian than Darrell, was inspired by the deep, silent and disappointed love he bore her to devote himself to her service. He made no resolution of this sort, being what is commonly called an unsentimental man-that is, a man ruled by a sentiment so strong that he does not know it is a sentiment at all; but she was always in his mind and, as far as he could contrive it, within his reach. He was one of those men whose guardianship of a woman is perfectly well understood. He had been called "old Pelham" from the days when he was a sub-lieutenant, and as a captain near his majority he was "old Pelham" still. And Elizabeth, in a very little while, made the painful discovery, which often waits upon marriages, that she had walked over the straight stick and picked up a crooked one. Not that Darrell was ever anything but kind to her and altogether admirable as a husband. But he was dull and

Pelham was clever; he was tactless and Pelham was full of tact; he had no conversation, and Pelham, whenever he spoke, had something to say. And with all this, Pelham had a sinewy strength of character which was a shield and buckler to any woman he loved. It had often occurred to Elizabeth that Pelham deserved the credit for the loftv purity of their relations; for Elizabeth's nature was like an open book to him, and he read therein, within a year of her marriage, that her heart was hisfor which neither of the poor souls was to blame. It was the reflection from Pelham's spotless integrity which made Elizabeth scrupulous in her conduct with other men and unvaryingly kind and tender toward her husband. Poor Jack Darrell was too stupid to see, too dull to suspect that Elizabeth's conduct was inspired by duty, not love; and the devotion of the Darrells to each other was a by-word in the regiment. Not a single person suspected that "old Pelham" carried a broken heart around with him or that Elizabeth Darrell, who treated Pelham like a brother, was secretly consumed with love for him.

The Darrells had eight years of the happy-go-lucky existence of young army people with small pay and a smaller allowance. They had one child, which died in infancy and for which Elizabeth grieved as mothers grieve. No more were given her, and she had the added danger of a childless wife, young and beautiful and surrounded by a swarm of subalterns whenever she appeared. But no breath of scandal touched her name, with subalterns any more than with Pelham. There was much talk and chaff between Darrell and Pelham about a mythical fortune which might come to Darrell and, if he had no male heirs, to Pelham. One day, however, the myth proved a fact; the fortune-no very great one-came to Darrell.

Darrell promptly resigned from the army and set up a London establishment. For the first time in her life Elizabeth knew ease and luxury. She had one brilliant year—she could not

call it exactly happy. Pelham was in India still, but Elizabeth was then old enough and strong enough to guide herself. Nevertheless, she was conscious that she was not so good a woman, so good a wife, without Pelham as with him. She was looking for his return when she saw his appointment gazetted to an expedition far into East Africa, which would take him away from civilization for an indefinite time. And at the moment when Pelham was beyond reach of letters or despatches lack Darrell died after a week's illness.

There is a French school of moralists which says that a man may love two women at once. Elizabeth Darrell certainly loved two men at once. Pelham was always and forever the man she would have married, but Darrell's honest love was not thrown away on her. She mourned him as she had mourned for her child-neither one infringing in the least on Pelham's place in her heart. But she had to lose many other things along with her husband. Every penny of the estate and, as it seemed to Elizabeth, every chair and table was entailed, and the provision for the widow was next to

nothing.

With more than the average woman's incapacity for business, Elizabeth was far from realizing the situation to which she was brought. The fact that Pelham was the heir after Darrell, she thought, would make everything easy to her. He had taken the attitude of an elder brother toward her ever since her marriage, and what more natural than that she should depend upon him now? But he neither came nor wrote. Elizabeth was puzzled and troubled at his silence, but tried to explain it by his absence in East Africa, beyond reach of communication. His and Darrell's old regiment was still in India, so she was not much in the way of hearing anything of him by chance. There were persons likely to know something of him, but she shrank from hunting these persons up to ask after a man who had not made the least inquiry about her, although every consideration would induce him to communicate with her. She had few friends or acquaintances in London, owing to her brief residence there, and none of them knew any more of Pelham's whereabouts than she did.

She remained in London month after month, hoping to hear something from him, giving a reason which served perfectly well to herself, her few acquaintances in London and her father in America—that she was settling up her affairs. She unhappily found herself with a very large affair on her hands which she was quite unable to settle.

The only thing in the way of jewels which Darrell had inherited with the estate was a very handsome diamond and pearl necklace. He had caused it to be reset, and added some fine stones to it, and made a gift of it to Elizabeth only a few days before his death. In her stress for money Elizabeth confided the necklace to a person who called himself a diamond broker, who advanced her five hundred pounds—about a fourth of its value—on it.

As the way is with such sums, it went rapidly, and Elizabeth was terrified at the position in which she found herself. Yet the hope was ever with her that some fine day Pelham would walk in, tell her not to give herself any further anxiety-act, in short, as she had every right to expect him to act. But the months slipped away into a year and more, and still he neither came nor wrote. But his solicitor, a very Scotch person, by the name of Macbean, both came and wrote. He wrote first, inquiring about the necklace, which he said was the property of the estate; and, receiving no answer to his letter, he came to Elizabeth's lodgings and demanded it.

Exasperated by his demands, and ignorant of the legal rights of the matter, Elizabeth received Macbean haughtily and declined to give up the necklace, which, indeed, she neither had nor could get. Some angry words passed, and Macbean uttered a sentence or two which Elizabeth construed to mean that he was in communication with Pelham and was act-

ing strictly under Pelham's instructions. The shock it gave her, the death-like pallor, the trembling which made her unable to speak or stand, would have touched any heart except a solicitor's. But Mr. Macbean, seeing that Pelham's was the name to conjure with, used it remorselessly. It was inevitable that Elizabeth should feel a deep and instant resentment against Pelham, as soon as she convinced herself that he knew of Macbean's course, and condoned, if he did not inspire it. She recovered some of her composure before the interview was over, and said, with great bitterness:

"If Major Pelham thinks my husband did not give me the necklace, and did not buy the best stones in it, let him come to me. I hardly think he will doubt my word to my face." And she swept out of Macbean's presence without listening to his argument that it was not her word, but Darrell's power to give, which was doubted.

Macbean had threatened, if in the meantime the necklace were not forth-coming, to take legal steps within a month; but before the month was over Elizabeth was on her way to America. She had no sense of guilt whatever. She firmly believed the jewels were hers, and fled from Macbean as from a persecutor.

As for Pelham's share in it-well, let him come out in the open, if he wished to fight her. The indignation she cherished toward him by no means lessened the cruel sense of loss she felt in being bereft of his counsel, his forethought, his tenderness, to which she had been so long accustomed. Rather was this indignation increased, because she feared that she had been the victim of her own vanity and Pelham's duplicity ever since she had known him. There was, however, one refuge left her-her father's house; and now she was in that house, in the same room from which she had gone forth a bride; everything about her was unchanged, except herself, and she was changed in soul and spirit-or thought she was.

She had been a wife and a mother. she had suffered a real and lasting passion for a man not her husband. but she had not transgressed a hair's breadth; she had experienced both poverty and wealth, she had known and felt more in her thirty years than most women do in a lifetime; and yet it seemed to her as if she had only turned over, without the opportunity to read and study, those glowing pages in the book of a woman's life—the love of a man, the love of a child, the beauty of the world. Now all was over-even Pelham's love and tender consideration, which had been hers for so long that she scarcely recognized the face of life without them. Nothing was left for her except her father, the best of men and fathers; but this was not enough for a nature like Elizabeth Darrell's.

While these thoughts were passing through Elizabeth's mind darkness had fallen. Lights were twinkling The great house oppoeverywhere. site radiated brightness from every window, and it occurred to Elizabeth. as to every sorrowful and disappointed person, that everyone in that luxurious and brilliant house must be happy. Probably the girl of the boudoir whose attitude had expressed such dejection was grieving over some trifle, like a disappointment in a dance or the failure of some plan of pleasure.

Then she heard the street door open and a step which she recognized as her father's, and she had the first sensation of gladness she had felt for so long that she had almost forgotten what gladness was.

General Brandon, standing under the flaring gas-jet in the narrow hall, saw the black figure flying down the stairs toward him. He stopped, trembling with emotion; he who had without a tremor faced death a hundred times was shaken at the sight of his child in her mourning garments. The next minute her head was on his shoulder and he was patting it, saying: "My child—my ever dear child—welcome at all times, more welcome in your sorrow—"

Elizabeth looked up, smiling and weeping. It was the first time since her husband's death that she had not

seemed in everybody's way.

General Brandon gazed at her, at the changes that ten years had made, at the marks of the recent shipwreck of her hopes and joys, at the pallor and thinness that brooding over her misfortunes had brought upon her, and then he said, with a tremulous smile and with tears in his honest eyes:

"It is doubly sweet to have you

back unchanged."

He led her into the dingy, well-remembered drawing-room, and they sat hand in hand on the sofa, talking, Elizabeth dwelling upon her husband's goodness to her, and mentioning none of her woes and perplexities in that first hour of meeting. Then Serena announced dinner, and General Brandon, with the air of escorting a queen regent, placed his daughter at the head of the table.

"And never, since the day of your marriage, my love, have I ever sat down to this table without remembering you and wishing that you were

seated at this place," he said.

To Elizabeth it seemed that the place she had in that dull dining-room was the only place she had any right to, except under sufferance, since that June morning, now nearly a year and a half past, when her husband had died.

Not only was General Brandon glad to see her, but Serena seemed equally so. Serena was a distinct acquisition to Elizabeth. When the dinner was fairly begun the general produced a bottle of champagne.

"Provided to celebrate your return.

my dearest," he said.

Elizabeth could scarcely drink it for the tears that threatened to overflow.

The dining-room was just as it had been ten years ago, only duller and dingier; but it was scrupulously neat. General Brandon's joy at seeing her was not troubled by any apprehensions as to the shortcomings of his household. All during dinner his spirits did not flag, and insensibly Eliza-

beth's turbulent heart grew more composed. Her father asked her minute particulars of everything concerning her married life, and when Elizabeth told of Darrell's unvarying goodness to her a singular look of relief came into her father's face-he had always had a dim apprehension that Elizabeth was not rightly mated with Darrell - which was true. Brandon delicately refrained from asking any questions about her means, but Elizabeth told him frankly that the sole provision available for her, after Pelham inherited the property, was about two hundred pounds a year, contingent on her remaining a widow.

"Why, that is opulence?" said General Brandon, with the ideas of opulence of an ex-Confederate officer in a Government clerkship. "That will suffice amply for your needs, and whatever I can supply, my dear, is yours; and I need not say that this house and all in it are at your com-

plete disposal."

Elizabeth rose and went over to him and kissed him. After all, there was some goodness left in the world. She did not once mention Pelham; but presently her father asked:

"And in your trouble, where was Major Pelham, of whom you so often wrote me in years past, as being most kind and brotherly to you? And as he was the next heir, he owed you

much consideration."

Elizabeth, by an effort, spoke calmly.

"He was starting for East Africa when Jack died. I have heard nothing from him, but I know, through his solicitor—a very rude person—that Major Pelham has not been to England."

"And Major Pelham has not even written you a letter of condolence?"

"No."

"Most strange. And his solicitor is in communication with him?"

"Yes."

Elizabeth was surprised at the steadiness of her voice in answering these questions, but General Brandon noticed for the first time a tremor in her tones.

"I cannot understand such conduct—and particularly as I retain a most agreeable recollection of Major Pelham—Captain Pelham he was at the

time of your marriage."

Then, to Elizabeth's relief, her father left off speaking of Pelham and gave her a minute account of all her Virginia relations and their doings during the last ten years. Elizabeth listened, her head on her hand, the light from the flaring chandelier falling upon her rich hair, one of her beauties left unimpaired. She appeared to be strictly attentive, but in truth she scarcely heard one word of what her father, in his soft, well-bred voice, was saying. Her mind was going over, as it had done many hundreds of times, the strange problem about Pelham. Was it possible that a mere matter of money and an estate had so changed him that he could forget her, after nine years of devotion, silent, it is true, but none the less eloquent? Or was it, after all, mere lip service he had paid her? This she could not quite believe, and so was tormented between longing and regret on one hand and resentment on the other. Pelham at least was a gentleman, and yet he had not observed any sentiment of courtesy or attention to her when he was under every obligation to do so. He must know what sort of man Mr. Macbean was, and yet he had left her completely in Macbean's power. And the remembrance of Macbean brought back the recollection of the money she owed on the necklace of which Macbean was trying to rob her-and she was glad to take refuge from her perplexing and contradictory thoughts by paying more heed to what her father was saying. He had got through with a part of his relations, and with a view of interesting Elizabeth in her future home was telling her something of those friends and acquaintances left in Washington.

"You remember Sara Luttrell, my dear?" asked General Brandon, with a smile. "Well, she is the same Sara Luttrell I danced with forty-five years ago at West Point. Nobody knew her age then and nobody knows it now—and Time seems to have passed her by. She still lives in her fine old house, gives two dinners a week herself, and goes out to dine the remaining five evenings, and nobody dares cross her except her nephew—her husband's nephew, I should say—Richard Baskerville."

"I think I remember Mr. Baskerville. He was a very agreeable young

man when I knew him."

"Richard Baskerville, my dear, is a very remarkable man. He has a comfortable fortune of his own and will inherit every stiver of Sara Luttrell's money. But he works hard at his profession of the law and has made a name for himself. His fortune and position make it possible for him to devote himself to civics, and he is frequently engaged in the investigations of violations of the civil service law and in matters coming before Congress in which there is reason to suspect fraud. Just now he is in the thick of a fight with my neighbor in the fine house across the way-Senator Claveringwho is under fire at the present time before a senatorial committee concerning some alleged gigantic frauds with railway land grants in the Far West. I knew Clavering well before the war, when I was a captain of infantry and he was a sutler-post traders they now call themselves, and I understand their daughters aspire to be visited by the young officers.

So the big, beautiful house belonged to this man Clavering! Elizabeth felt an immediate and strange interest on hearing about the people who lived in that charming abode. She wondered why she should wish to hear more of these people whose names she had heard only at that moment, but never-

theless she did.

Nothing pleased General Brandon so much as to talk of things which happened before the war except to talk about those which happened during the war.

"Clavering, however, was not the man to remain a sutler very long. He made money at the business—they all

do: Napoleon Bonaparte was the only man who knew how to treat a man supplying soldiers. In the days when I knew Clavering a sutler was a sutler; nevertheless. Clavering was such a remarkable man that no one who knew him could forget him. I used often to talk with him, and he professed to be under some obligations to me for certain small acts of kindness. After giving up the post tradership for something better I heard of him at intervals-sometimes he was up and sometimes he was down. Then he went into mining, prospecting and land buying on a great scale and developed, what I had always observed in him, a remarkable capacity for men and affairs. Five years ago he came to the Senate, built this splendid house you saw on the corner and set up for a statesman and a gentleman. Ha! ha! I must say, however, that he had some qualifications for both. His family are conspicuous socially-he has three daughters and a son. The son is a worthy young man and very pious; he goes to St. Bartholomew's Chapel, where I attend service, as I did when I had the joy of having you with me, my child.'

The general was a strict churchman, and it was no small recommendation that Clavering had a son who was also

a strict churchman.

"And one of Clavering's daughters—Miss Anne Clavering—is very much admired and respected. Another of his daughters has had the misfortune to be divorced. His wife is little seen in society. She was a plain but most excellent woman when I knew her thirty years ago. This investigation, of which Richard Baskerville is one of the leading spirits, must be extremely painful to the ladies of Clavering's family."

General Brandon prattled on until ten o'clock came, when he always went to his modest club for an hour. He escorted Elizabeth to her door and said good night, giving her a blessing

like the patriarchs of old.

As soon as she was alone Elizabeth put out the gas and, opening the window, looked out upon the night.

It was a damp and chilly night few vagrant stars in the sky and a sickly moon setting. The vast mass of foliage which makes Washington a great park still hung upon the trees, but was yellowing and decaying. There were not many lights in the houses round about, except in the Clavering mansion. for it was not yet the full season in Washington. But while Elizabeth was looking a carriage drove under the Clavering porte-cochère, an alert footman opened the huge street door and spread a carpet down the steps. In a moment the girl Elizabeth had seen in the boudoir came out in an evening costume, with a white silk mantle enveloping her. Elizabeth had a perfectly clear view of her as she passed down the steps under a great, swinging lantern. She was not beautiful, but interesting, graceful and with an air of perfect breeding. After her came one of the handsomest men Elizabeth had ever seen. He was well past middle age, but his figure was noble, his features without line or wrink e, his complexion ruddy with health and his close-cropped iron-gray hair abundant. Elizabeth divined that it was Clavering and one of his daughters, for, although the girl had by no means the beauty of the man, there was sufficient likeness to show that they were father and daughter.

Elizabeth watched them with singular interest as the carriage rolled off. She had never expected to feel an interest in anything again, and that which she felt in these strange people seemed ominous. For Elizabeth, being

a woman, was superstitious.

II

SARA LUTTRELL, as General Brandon called her, was sitting in her fine old-fashioned drawing-room, enjoying her invariable Saturday evening gossip with her nephew-in-law, Richard Baskerville, preparatory to her invariable Saturday evening dinner. This Saturday dinner was as much of an institution with Mrs. Luttrell as her

ermine cape or her free-spoken tongue. all of them being Medic and Persian in nature. Nobody knew how many decades this Saturday evening dinner had been established, just as nobody knew Mrs. Luttrell's age, except that it was somewhere between sixty and ninety. This dinner, which no more than six persons attended, took place at the unfashionable hour of seven. But seven had been the fashionable hour when Mrs. Luttrell began her Saturday dinners, and although she conceded much to the new fashions introduced by the smart set-more, indeed, than she ever admitted-and had advanced her formal dinner hour to half-after eight, yet she clung to seven for this Saturday evening institution. No other dinner invitation could lure Mrs. Luttrell from her own table on Saturday evenings, and it was one of the incidents of the warfare which had once raged between her and the lady of the White House that Mrs. Luttrell should have been asked to dine at the White House on a Saturday evening. Mrs. Luttrell, however, came off triumphant. She could not have her own dinner that night, but in the very nick of time she heard of the death of a seventeenth cousin in Maryland. Mrs. Luttrell immediately asked to be excused from the White House on the ground of the death of a relative, and clapped herself, her coachman and footman in mourning for a seventeenth cousin she had not seen in thirty years and had always cordially detested. To be in ignorance of the sacredness of Mrs. Luttrell's Saturday evenings was a crime of grave magnitude in her eyes, and to respect her rights on Saturday was to take a toboggan slide into her favor. It was the law that Richard Baskerville should dine with her on Saturday, and although that young man maintained a perfect independence toward her in every other respect, in spite of the fact that she had made a will giving him every stiver of her fortune, he was careful to reserve his Saturday evenings for her.

The old lady and the young man sat

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opposite each other before a glowing wood fire in the great drawing-room. Mrs. Luttrell was a small, high-bred, handsome woman, with snow-white hair, perfect teeth, a charming smile, a reckless tongue and a fixed determination to have her own way twentyfour hours out of the day and three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, with an additional day thrown in at leap-year. Time had left a few external marks upon her, but in essentials she was the same woman General Brandon had danced with forty-five years before. She was in love with the same man, who even then was in his early grave-Richard Luttrell, the husband of her youth. He had been dead unnumbered years, and only one person on earth-his nephew, Richard Baskerville-suspected that Mrs. Luttrell cherished her husband's memory with a smoldering and silent passion-the only thing she was ever known to be silent about in her life.

Mrs. Luttrell sat bolt upright, after the ancient fashion, in her carved ebony chair, while Richard Baskerville lounged at his ease on the other side of the marble mantel. He was a wellmade man of thirty-five, without any particular merit in the way of beauty; but so clear of eye, so clean cut of feature, so expressive of a man's intelligence and a man's courage that people forgot to ask whether he was handsome or not. Mrs. Luttrell always stoutly maintained that he was very handsome, but found few to agree with her. Her belief came, however, from his resemblance to the miniature of her husband which she kept in her capacious pocket-for she still insisted on pockets in her gowns, and this miniature never left her by day or

Mrs. Luttrell's drawing-room was the admiration and the despair of people who knew something about drawing-rooms. It might have been taken bodily from the Second French Empire, of which Mrs. Luttrell had seen a good deal, for she had known the Third Napoleon well at some indefinite period in her history. The room was large

and square and high pitched, and wholly innocent of bay-windows, cozy corners and such architectural fallals. The ceiling was heavily ornamented with plaster in the Italian style, and the cornice was superb. Over the fireplace was a great white marble mantel with a huge mirror above it, and in one corner of the room a grand piano, something under a hundred years old, looked like a belle in hoopskirts. There was a wealth of old rosewood furniture, pictures, candelabra, girandoles. Dresden ornaments and other beautiful old things which would have made a collector turn green with envy.

Mrs. Luttrell was vain about her drawing-room, and with reason. She proudly claimed that there was not a single technical antique in it, and frequently declared she could tell the age of any family by a glance at their drawing-room. The newer the family the more antique the furniture, and when a family was absolutely new their house was furnished with antiques, and nothing but antiques, from top to

bottom.

Mrs. Luttrell was gossiping hard as she sat before her drawing-room fire, shading her eyes from the leaping blaze with an old-fashioned fan and waiting for her guests to arrive. When Mrs. Luttrell gossiped she was happy. One of the compensations to her for the new dispensation in Washington society was that it gave her plenty to gossip about. Ever since the advent in Washington society of pickles, dry-goods, patent medicines, shoes, whisky, and all the other brands of honest trade she had been engaged in a hand-to-hand fight to maintain her prestige as a leading hostess of Washington, against the swarms of newcomers, whose vast fortunes made Mrs. Luttrell's hitherto ample income seem like genteel poverty. The rest of the "cave-dwellers," as the original society of Washington is now called, had never made any fight at all. They regarded the new influx with haughty disdain in the first instance, laughed at their gaucheries, and spoke of them pityingly as, "Poor Mrs. So-and-so,"

"Those queer persons from nobody knows where." The first accurate knowledge, however, that came to them of the "smart set," as the new people are called, was when the cavedwellers were seized by the backs of their necks and were thrown over the ramparts of society, leaving the smart set in possession of the citadel.

Mrs. Luttrell, however, was not so easily disposed of as the rest. She saw that the Chinese policy of ignoring the enemy and representing a total rout as a brilliant victory would never do; so she set about holding her own with intelligence as well as courage. She called upon the new people, invited to her house those she liked, and Baskerville, who was the only living person who dared to contradict her, declared that Mrs. Luttrell never was known to decline an invitation to dine with any form of honest trade, no matter how newly emancipated. Her strongest weapon was, however, the capacity she had always possessed of bringing men about her. She was one of those men's women whom age cannot wither nor custom stale. Her esprit, her knowledge of how to make men comfortable in mind and body when in her house, her insidious flattery, which usually took the form of delicate raillery, had charmed successive generations of men. Her kingdom had been long established, and she knew how to reign.

In her early widowhood she had been much pestered with offers of marriage, but it had not taken many years to convince her world that she would die Sara Luttrell. Every cause except the right one was given for this, for of all women Mrs. Luttrell was the last one to be suspected of a sentiment so profound as the lifelong

mourning for a lost love.

But it was perhaps just this touch of passionate regret, this fidelity to an ideal, which constituted half her charm to men. At an age when most women are content to sink into grand-motherhood Mrs. Luttrell was surrounded by men of all ages in a manner to make a debutante envious. Other

hostesses might have to rack their brains for dinner men; Mrs. Luttrell was always embarrassed with riches in this respect. An afternoon visit at her house meant finding a dozen desirable men whom hospitable hostesses languished for in vain. Even a tea, that function dreaded of women because it means two women to one man, became in Mrs. Luttrell's splendid, old-fashioned drawing-room a company in which the masculine element exactly balanced the feminine. She could have made the fortune of a debutante, and hence ambitious mothers sought her favor. Mrs. Luttrell, however, never had made a debutante's fortune and never intended to, holding that the power to grant a favor is more respected than the favor itself.

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Then, too, it was well known that Richard Baskerville, one of the most desirable and agreeable men in Washington, was always to be found at her house, and was certain to inherit her fortune; and he had the ability, the wit and the grace to be an attraction in himself. The old lady would have liked it well if Baskerville had consented to live in a suite of the big, unused rooms in the house, but this he would not do. He agreed as a compromise, however, to buy a small house back of Mrs. Luttrell's, and by using an entrance in her large, oldfashioned garden it was almost as if he were in the same house.

Mrs. Luttrell followed the new customs and fashions so far as she thought judicious, and no farther. She knew the power of old customs and fashions when properly used. She held to her big landau, with her long-tailed black horses and her portly negro coachman and footman, because it gave her opportunities to intimidate the newly rich while apparently apologizing for her antique equipage.

"My carriage and horses and servants haven't varied much for forty years, and I can't change now. It's all very well for you people who are accustomed to sudden changes to have your smart broughams and victorias,

and your pink and white English coachmen and footmen, but it would look perfectly ridiculous in Sara Luttrell, don't you see?"

This to some aspiring newcomers whose equipage had been in a steady process of evolution from the time that a buggy was a luxury until now every season saw a complete revolution in their stables. Or,

"I know my ermine cape looks as if it was made in Queen Elizabeth's time, but I can't afford to throw it away; and, Lord bless you, what does it matter whether one is in the fashion or not?"

This to a lady who knew that her whole social existence depended upon her being in fashion.

It was insolent, of course, but Mrs. Luttrell meant to be insolent, and was so successfully, smiling meanwhile her youthful smile, showing her perfect teeth and certain of an answering smile from the men who were always at her elbow. Her whole world then thought she defied and laughed at the smart set, but Richard Baskerville saw, and had the assurance to tell her, that she secretly liked them very much, and even sought their countenance by unique means.

"Well," said Mrs. Luttrell, settling herself and adjusting the immortal ermine cape around her lace-covered shoulders, "I have a surprise in store for you tonight. Who do you think is to dine here?"

"Myself number one—Senator and Mrs. Thorndyke and Judge Woodford. I believe you are in love with that man, Sara Luttrell."

This calling her by her first name Mrs. Luttrell reckoned a charming piece of impudence on Richard Baskerville's part, and in saying it his smile was so pleasant, his voice so agreeable, his manner so arch that he conveyed extreme flattery by it.

"No, my dear boy, you are mistaken in that particular. But I have a surprise in store for you."

A pause.
"Why don't you ask me who it

"Because you'll tell me within two minutes if I just let you alone."

"It is-Anne Clavering."

Richard Baskerville sat up quickly. Surprise and pleasure shone in his face. "Why, Sara! I didn't think you could do anything as decent as that."

"I don't know why. I've always liked the girl. And I believe you are

about half in love with her."

"You are such a suspicious old woman! But considering the share I am taking on the part of the original mortgages in those K. F. R. land grants, which may land Senator Clavering in State's prison, I feel some delicacy in paying any attention to his daughter."

"Naturally, I should think. But you were deep in the land-grant lawsuits before you ever met Anne Clav-

ering.

"Yes, that's true. She once asked me to call, but I never felt I could do so under the circumstances, though Clavering himself, who is a pachyderm, so far as the ordinary feelings of mankind go, is as chummy as you please with me whenever we meet. And he actually invited me to visit his house! Miss Clavering probably knew nothing of the specific reason that keeps me away, but Clavering does, you may be sure. I have met Miss Clavering everywhere, and every time I see her I am lost in wonder as to how she came to be Senator Clavering's daughter or the sister of Mrs. Denman and that youngest daughter, Lydia."

"A couple of painted Jezebels, that are enough to drag any family to perdition. The old woman, I hear, murders the king's English and eats with her knife, but is a good soul. And if it wasn't for the determined stand Anne Clavering has taken for her mother I don't imagine there is much doubt that Senator Clavering would have divorced her long ago. But Anne stands up for her mother, makes them all treat her tolerably, and is assisted by the brother—a poor rag of a man, but perfectly respectable—Reginald Clavering. Did you ever notice how common people run to high-flown names? None of our plain Johns and Georges and Marys and Susans and Janes for them—they get their names, I think, out of Ouida's novels."

Richard Baskerville rose and stood in front of the fire. Mrs. Luttrell could not complain of any want of interest on his part in the subject under discussion.

"Miss Clavering, as I told you, invited me to call on her when I first met her. However, I had scruples about going to the house of a man I was fighting as I am fighting Senator Clavering, so I never went, and she never repeated the invitation. She is a very proud woman."

"Very. And she is the only one of her class I have ever seen who was

really a scientific fighter."

"How pitiable it is, though, for a girl to have to fight her way through so-

ciety!'

"Yes—but Anne Clavering does it, and does it gallantly. Nobody can be impertinent to her with impunity. Do you know, the first thing that made me like her was the way she hit back when I gave her a gentle correction."

"I am delighted to hear it, and I hope

she whipped you well."

"Not exactly—but she stood up before me long enough to make me respect her and ask her to one of my little Saturday dinners."

"Mrs. Thorndyke is always asking her to dinner, and I know of no woman more discerning than Mrs. Thorn-

dyke."

"Yes. Constance Thorndyke knows a great deal. But, you see, her husband is in the Senate and so she has to have some sorts of people at her house that I don't have. However, I know she is really a friend of Anne Clavering, and it is perfectly plain that, although Miss Clavering is a nouveau riche hereself, she hasn't an overwhelming respect for her own 'Order,' as Ouida would say. She is ten times more flattered to be entertained by people like the Thorndykes and myself than by the richest pork-packing or dry-goods family in Washington."

"Certainly she is, as a woman of

sense would be."

"As for that divorcée, Elise Den-

man, and that younger girl, Lydia, they are the two greatest scamps, as they are the two handsomest women, in this town. They are not deficient in their own peculiar sort of sense and courage, and they have whipped the Brentwood-Baldwins handsomely about that pew in St. John's Church. The religion of these brand-new people is the most diverting thing about them, next to their morals!"

"'They also are the sons of God,"

replied Baskerville, quoting.

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"Don't believe that for a moment! Most of 'em are the sons and daughters of Satan, and nobody else. If ever the Episcopal Church—the Anglican Church, they call it - comes out squarely against divorce I don't know where it will land the smart set or what they'll do for a religion. They will have to become esoteric Buddhists or something of the sort. At present a pew in a fashionable church is the very first round on the social ladder. I have gone to St. John's all my life, and my father was one of the original pewholders, but I declare, if I could find a well-warmed Episcopal church in southeast Washington, or Anacostia even, I'd go to it."

"No, you wouldn't."

"Yes, I would. I don't know how the dispute with the Brentwood-Baldwins came about, but there was a pew near the President's which both the Claverings and the Brentwood-Baldwins wanted, and those two pagan daughters of Senator Clavering got it. You ought to have seen the Brentwood-Baldwin girl and those other two girls pass each other last Sunday morning coming out of church; they exchanged looks which were equivalent to a slap in the face."

"And you wouldn't have missed see-

ing it for worlds."

"Why, it's true I like to see a fight."

"For pure love of fighting I never saw your equal, Sara Luttrell."

"I come by it honestly. I am of as good fighting stock as you are, Richard Baskerville. But the Clavering-Brentwood-Baldwin row is not the only religious war in this town. You know Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner— I know her husband was originally Jim Skinner before he went to glory."

"Now, who told you that?"

"Oh, nobody. I just felt it in my bones. Well, Mrs. Skinner has a new and original fad—that woman is clever! She has seen the automobile fad, and the fancy-ball fad, and the monkey-dinner fad, and the dining-on-board-the-emperor's-yacht fad, and the exclusive-school fad, and the exclusive-theatrical-performance fad. She has done horse shows and yacht races and dinners-to-the-ambassador, and now she has outfooted New York and Newport and left Chicago at the post. She has a private chapel and she's going to have a private chaplain!"

"Oh, Lord, you dreamed it!" "No, I didn't, Richard, my dear. You see, the Jim Skinners"-Mrs. Luttrell pronounced it as if it were "jimskinners"-"were originally honest Methodists, but these people shed their religion along with their old clothes and plated forks. And now Mrs. Jimskinner has become Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner and an ardent Episcopalian, and so has Gladys Jimskinner, and Gwendolen Jimskinner, and Lionel Jimskinner, and Harold Jimskinner, and I believe that woman has set her heart on having what she calls an Anglican archbishop in these United States."

"If she has I know it is you who put the microbe in her head."

It was a chance shot, but it hit the

white.

"I think I did, Richard," meekly replied Mrs. Luttrell. "Mrs. Jimskinner—I mean Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner—was urging me to join the Order of St. Monica; that's an order in which widows pledge themselves not to get married again. I told her there wasn't the least reason for me to join, for, although I've never told my age to any living person, I hardly consider myself on the matrimonial list any longer. And then Mrs. Van Cortlandt Skinner told me of the various beautiful brand-new orders in the church, and

said she thought of getting an order founded for one of her boys; the other one would have to marry and perpetuate the family. And I suggested a contemplative order with a nice name, like the Order of St. Werewolf. She rather liked the notion, and said she would build a beautiful monastery on her estate on the Hudson, and whichever one of her boys she decided to indulge in a life of celibacy she would have made the first superior. And then I said-now, Richard, don't be rude-I said how much simpler all these delightful things would be if we only had an archbishop like the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Mrs. Van Cortlandt Skinner said she had always thought that and had often longed for an archbishop, and the development of the church required one; and then I caught Senator Thorndyke's eve-we were coming out of church-and I ran away."

"You wicked old woman! What

will you do next?"

"I haven't done anything. You see, Mrs. Jimskinner belongs to that class who don't see any reason why they shouldn't have anything they happen to fancy. If they get married and don't like it, they get a divorce and a new husband or wife as they get a new butler when they discharge the one they have. If they want a title, they go and buy one. If they want a crest, they simply take one. They can't understand why they shouldn't do anything or have anything they want. I declare, Mrs. Jimskinner was talking to me with the simplicity of a child, and she's as bent on that private chaplain and that archbishop as if each was the latest style of automobile. I don't wonder the London newspapers guy Americans, remembering what kind of Americans find their way into London society."

"That reminds me—I met General Brandon two days ago, and his daugh-

ter, Mrs. Darrell."

"Yes, Elizabeth Darrell has come back, as poor as a church-mouse, I hear, and with most of her beauty gone. I shall call to see her. She will find a very different Washington from the one she left ten years ago."

"Miss Clavering," announced the

negro butler.

Anne Clavering, graceful and selfpossessed, entered the room. She had
not the sumptuous beauty of her sisters
nor remarkable beauty at all, yet, as
Elizabeth Darrell had seen in that first
accidental view of her, she was more
than beautiful—she was interesting.
She had no marks of race, but she had
every mark of refinement. Her gown
was simple, but exquisite, and she
wore no jewels. Mrs. Luttrell received her amiably and even affectionately, and her quick eye noted
that both Anne and Baskerville blushed
at meeting.

"So you are not above coming out to an unfashionable dinner with an old fogy," she said, taking Anne's

hand.

"I believe it is considered one of the great privileges of Washington to dine with you at one of your 'unfashionable dinners,'" Anne replied, with her pleasant smile. This made Anne's fortune with Mrs. Luttrell.

In a minute or two more Senator and Mrs. Thorndyke were announced, and they were promptly followed by Judge Woodford, a handsome, antique gentleman, who had for forty years counted on being one day established as the head of Mrs. Lutrell's fine

house.

The Thorndykes were not a young couple, although they had not been long married. Their love affair had covered a long period of separation and estrangement, and at last, when Fate had relented and had brought them together in their maturity, it gave them by way of recompense a depth of peace, of confidence of quiet happiness, and a height of thrilling joy at coming into their own inheritance of love, that made for them a heaven upon earth.

Thorndyke, a high-bred, scholarly man of the best type of New England, hid under a cool exterior an ardent and devoted nature. Constance Thorndyke was exteriorly the scintillant, magnetic Southern woman, but inwardly she was as strong and as sustaining as Thorndyke himself. Neither of them had a grain of mawkish sentimentality, and they were always differing playfully when they really differed seriously; but they never differed in their love and admiration of

what was good.

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Baskerville took Anne out to dinner. He had several times had that good fortune, especially in Mrs. Thorndyke's house, and so far as dinner companions went he and Anne were well acquainted. Anne had been deeply mortified at Baskerville's ignoring her invitation to call, and the reason she at once suspected—his knowledge of her father's character and his share of furnishing information to the senatorial committee which was investigating Senator Clavering. She did not for one moment suspect that Baskerville put compulsion on himself to keep away from her house. She was conscious of a keen pleasure in his society, and a part of the gratification she felt at being asked to one of Mrs. Luttrell's intimate dinners was that Baskerville should know how Mrs. Luttrell esteemed her.

The dinner fulfilled all of Anne's expectations. The Thorndykes were socially accomplished, and Judge Woodford had been a professional diner-out since the days when President Buchanan had made him a third secretary of legation at Paris. Anne Clavering found herself adopted into the small circle, so different in birth and rearing from her own, by the freemasonry of good sense and good manners—in which she, however, was the equal of

anybody.

Mrs. Luttrell shone at her own table, and the restraint she put upon her tongue revealed her to be, when she chose, a person of perfect tact. And, indeed, her most outrageous speeches were matters of calculation, and were in themselves a species of tact. When entertaining guests in her own house, however, she showed only the amiable side of her nature, and she was always amiable to Richard Basker-

ville, the one human being in the world whom she really loved and feared. Anne was extremely amused at the attitude of Baskerville to Mrs. Luttrell, shown by such things as calling her by her first name and hectoring over her affectionately; all of which Mrs. Luttrell took meekly, only prophesying that if he ever married he would make an intolerable husband.

Anne Clavering noted that among these people of old and fixed position there was a great deal of chaff, while among the new people there was always great formality. The manners of the one set were simple, and of the latter elaborate. She also saw, being of a quick eye, that there were many differences in little things between the old and the new. The new had a different and complex fork for every course; but Mrs. Luttrell had, except some very old-fashioned oyster forks, the same handsome, plain old forks which had been in use in her family since silver forks were first adopted. There was no opportunity, if she had wished, to emulate a brand-new Washington hostess, who mentioned to a distinguished guest that he was eating his fish with the wrong fork. And Mrs. Luttrell had the temerity to have on the table her splendid old decanters in which was served the very last old port in Washington, "laid down by papa in '67."

When the dinner was over they closed around the drawing-room fire, and talked cozily, as people can seldom talk in the hurrying, rushing twentieth century; and then Mrs. Thorndyke, at Mrs. Luttrell's request, went to the grand piano and sang sweetly some songs as old-fashioned as the piano. Anne remembered with a blush the professional singers who were considered essential to the Clavering house after one of the large, magnificent and uncomfortable dinners which were a burden and an anxiety to all of the

Clavering family.

When the carriages were announced everybody was surprised at the lateness of the hour. Anne went up to Mrs. Luttrell and thanked her sincerely and prettily for one of the pleasantest

evenings she had ever spent in Washington. Mrs. Luttrell, who declared herself totally indifferent to blame or praise from one of the new people, was hugely flattered by this expression from

a Clavering.

Baskerville, having antique manners, put Anne in her carriage, and contrived to express in this small action a part of the admiration and homage he felt for her. Anne, driving home in the November night, experienced a strong and sudden revulsion of feeling from the quiet enjoyment of the evening. Bitterness overwhelmed her.

"How much happier and better off are those people than I and all my kind!" she thought. "They have no struggles to make, no slights to swallow or avenge, no social mortifications, nothing to hide, to fear or to be

ashamed of, while I---"

She buried her face in her hands as she leaned back in the carriage, and wept at the cruel thought that Baskerville would not come to her house because he did not think her father a decent man. And as she entered her own street she caught sight of Count Rosalka, a young attaché, helping Élise Denman out of a cab at the corner. Élise ran along the street and under the port-cochère as Anne got out of the carriage and walked up the steps. Élise's eyes were dancing, her mouth smiling; she looked like a bacchante. "Remember," she said, catching

Anne by the arms, "I've been out to

dinner, too."

The door was opened, not by one of the gorgeous footmen, but by Lydia, handsomer, younger and wickederlooking than Elise.

"Good for you, Lyd," whispered Elise; "I'll do as well by you some

time."

The footman then appeared, and grinned openly when Lydia remarked that as she was passing through the hall she recognized Miss Clavering's ring and opened the door.

Anne went upstairs, her heart sick within her. As she passed her mother's door she stopped, and a tremulous voice within called her. She entered

and sat awhile on her mother's elaborate, lace-trimmed bed. Mrs. Clavering, a homely, elderly woman, looked not less homely and elderly because of her surroundings. But not all the splendor of her lace and satin bed could eclipse the genuine goodness, the meekness, the gentleness in her plain and patient face. She listened eagerly to Anne's description of the dinner, which was cheerful enough, albeit her heart misgave her cruelly about Elise and Lydia.

When she had finished speaking Mrs. Clavering said, patting Anne's head with a kind of furtive affection:

"I think you know real nice, wellbehaved people, my dear, and I wish the other girls"—"gurls" she called

them-"were like you."

At that moment Baskerville and Senator Thorndyke were sitting in Baskerville's library, discussing a bottle of prime old whisky and looking at some books from a late auction. Mrs. Thorndyke had driven home, and Senator Thorndyke, preferring to walk, was spending an hour meanwhile in masculine talk unrestrained by the presence of the ladies. The two men were intimate, an intimacy which had originated when Baskerville was a college senior and Thorndyke was on the committee of their Greek letter society. There was a strong sympathy between them, although Thorndyke was a New Englander of New Englanders, and Baskerville a Virginian of Virginians. Both were lawyers of the oldtime, legal-politico sort, both of them scholarly men, both of them independent of popular favor, and both of them, while preaching the purest democracy, were natural aristocrats. They belonged to opposite political parties, but that rather added a zest to their friendship. The library in Baskerville's house, across the garden from Mrs. Luttrell's, was in the second story and extended the full width of the house. It was essentially a bachelor's working library, plain, comfortable, well warmed and lighted, and with an engaging touch of shabbiness. A big leather-covered table was in the middle of the room, and under the green light from a student lamp were displayed the books, the whisky, the water and the glasses. Baskerville's mind was not, however, on the books he was showing, but on Anne Clavering, and incidentally on Senator Clavering.

"How do you account for Miss Clavering being the daughter of Senator Clavering?" he asked Thorndyke,

as they pulled at their cigars.

"Those things can't be accounted for, although one sees such strange dissimilarities in families, everywhere and all the time. Miss Clavering is, no doubt, a case of atavism. Somewhere, two or three generations back, there was a strain of refinement and worth in her family, and she inherits from it. But I see something in her of Clavering's good qualities—because he has some good qualities—courage, for ex-

ample.

Courage—I should think so. Why, the way that man has fought the courts shows the most amazing courage. He is a born litigant, and it is extraordinary how he has managed to use the law to crush his opponents and has escaped being crushed himself. And in trying to follow his turnings and windings in this K. F. R. swindle it is astounding to see how he has contested every step of an illegal transaction until he has got everybody muddledlawyers, State and Federal courts, and the whole kit of them. As fast as one injunction was vacated he would take out another. He seems to have brought a separate and distinct lawsuit for every right in every species of property he ever possessed at any timeland, mines, railways and corporations. He has pocketed untold millions and has invoked the law to protect him when ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have been fugitives from justice. He is the most difficult scoundrel to catch I ever met-but we will catch him yet."

"I think you are hot on his trail in the K. F. R. matter," replied Thorndyke. "I believe myself that when the great expose is made before the investigating committee it will recommend his expulsion from the Senate. and three-fourths of the senators will support the committee. The Legislature is safe, so the party won't lose a seat; and in any event I don't believe we can afford to hold on to a man like Clavering after the country knows about him, especially with a Presidential campaign coming on within the year. I think, with all his talents, he would not be fitted for public life if he were as honest as he is dishonest. He has no idea, after all his litigation, of sound legal principles, and he is fully persuaded that any man, any court, any Legislature may be bought, and a more dangerous fallacy doesn't exist for a public man than that. He has never submitted to party discipline and has played politics with every party that has ever made a showing in his State. For all his money, he has never been a contributor to party funds; so I think, making due allowance for the weakness of human nature, that a horrible example will be made of Clavering, and we shall thereby deprive you of an effective party cry in the campaign. You are really doing us a service by your course, because without your unraveling the legal tangle I doubt if anything could have been made out of the K. F. R. frauds. I have no sympathy to waste on Clavering or any of his family that I know of, except Miss Clavering. It will go hard with her."

Baskerville's tanned complexion grew a little pale, and he sat silent for some moments; so silent that Thorndyke began to suspect Mrs. Thorndyke's idea was the right one after all-Baskerville was in love with Anne Clavering. Thorndyke had laughed at it as a woman's fancy, saying to her that a woman couldn't see a man pick up a girl's handkerchief without constructing a matrimonial project on the basis of it; but Constance Thorndyke had stoutly maintained her opinion that Baskerville was in love with Anne Clavering. His attitude now certainly indicated a very strong interest in her, especially when he said, after a consid-

erable pause:

"If I had known Miss Clavering before this K. F. R. matter was started perhaps I shouldn't have gone into it. There is something very painful, you must know, Thorndyke, in dealing a blow at a woman-and a woman like Miss Clavering. By heaven, for all the luxury she lives in and all the respect and admiration she commands, there is not a woman in Washington whom I pity more!"

Thorndyke had been turning over the leaves of a beautiful Apuleius, which was one of the treasures Baskerville was exhibiting to him. He opened the volume at the fifth metamorphosis and read out of it a single phrase which made Baskerville's face gain color.

"'The bold boy of evil ways.' There's nothing in all those old Greek literary fellows which excels this in humor-although what there is humorous in modern love I can't see. It's the most tragic thing in life, and if it is genuine it draws blood every time."

Thorndyke had reason to say this. He had spent the eighteen best years of his life solitary and ill at ease because of a woman's love and another woman's spite, and not all the happiness of married life could ever make either him or Constance Thorndyke forget their starved hearts in those eighteen years of estrangement and sepa-

But as normal men deal with sentimentalities in a direct and simple manner, Thorndyke added, after a minute:

"Miss Clavering ought to marry. If she could be cut loose from Clavering himself and those two handsome and outrageous sisters of hers it would be an unmixed blessing. But with all Miss Clavering's merit and charms that family of hers will always be a handicap with a man of the sort she would be likely to marry."

"Not if he really loved her, Thorndvke."

Senator Thorndyke smoked on in silence.

"And," continued Baskerville, "her mother is a most worthy woman, if uneducated; and although Reginald Clavering is a great fool, I believe he is a thoroughly upright man and even a gentleman. So you see it is not wholly a family of degenerates."

Thorndyke, seeing which way the tide was setting, remarked with per-

fect sincerity:

"Miss Clavering is worthy of any man; and I say so not only on my own judgment, but on my wife's."

"Sanest, soundest woman in Washington-except Miss Clavering herself," was Baskerville's reply to this.

When Senator Thorndyke reached home an hour afterward he roused his wife to tell her that he believed Baskerville was in love with Anne Clavering. after all.

And has been ever since he knew her; but men are so dense, he didn't know it himself-much less did you know it until it became as obvious as the Washington Monument," was Mrs. Thorndyke's wifely reply.

III

THE next day was a bright November Sunday, and after an early luncheon Baskerville started out for a walk into the country. Anne Clavering was much in his mind, and he was beginning to debate with himself in this wise: if Senator Clavering had no delicacy about inviting him to call, why should he be too delicate-minded to go? Which proves that Baskerville was in love with Anne Clavering, or he would have said that for him to go to a man's house in the circumstances in which he would enter Senator Clavering's was an outrageous breach of propriety.

When he got well out of the town he met the scanty congregation of a small Episcopal chapel in the suburbs. Among those strolling homeward he speedily recognized General Brandon and Elizabeth Darrell-and with them

Reginald Clavering.

This only son of Senator Clavering's was no more like him than Anne was, and, indeed, very much resembled Anne, except that he had neither her intelligence nor her grace. He had a

good and affectionate heart and in a foolish, blundering way was both an honest man and a gentleman. His life, however, was given over to small and futile things, and even his piety, which was genuine, embodied a childish worship of ecclesiastical trifles. He was the mainstay, chief financial backer and clerical man-of-all-work in the little chapel, while his sisters, Élise and Lydia, fought with the Brentwood-Baldwins at St. John's, and Anne, after going to an early morning service at the nearest church, devoted the rest of her Sunday to her mother.

Baskerville stopped and spoke with great cordiality to the party. He had known Elizabeth Darrell well in her girlhood, and there was a remote, seventeenth-cousin, Maryland-Virginia connection between the Baskervilles and the Brandons. His first glance at her in her mourning costume showed him that she had suffered much, and her beauty was partially eclipsed. She had gained interest, however, as the case often is, by learning the hard lessons of life, and Baskerville saw that she might regain all and more of her good looks with returning flesh and color, and a loss of the wearied and forlorn expression in her still glorious dark eyes. He asked permission to call upon her, and Elizabeth assented with outward grace and cheerfulness; but, in truth, it mattered little to her then whether she ever saw anyone again, except her father, andhumiliating thought!-Pelham, once more. For, angry as she was with Pelham, the thought of ever again meeting him was profoundly agitating to her. She inquired of Baskerville about Mrs. Luttrell, and sent her a kind message; then they parted and went upon their several ways.

Half an hour afterward, when Elizabeth Darrell was nearing her own door, she attracted the attention of Senator Clavering, who, sitting at his library window, caught sight of her graceful black figure as she stopped with her father and talked a few minutes with Reginald Clavering. Clavering's keen,

handsome eyes became fixed upon her with admiring approval. He was a connoisseur in feminine beauty, and all forms of it appealed to him. But, strange to say, the languid, interesting and somewhat tragic type which Elizabeth Darrell now represented was the most attractive to him, perhaps because it is the rarest.

"By Jove! what a woman! I must know her," was his inward comment.

He watched Elizabeth intently, her fragile figure, her peculiar grace of movement, the air of distinction in her whole person and air; and then and there he determined to resurrect his acquaintance with General Brandon, whose relationship to her was obvious, and whom Clavering had no more forgotten than General Brandon had

forgotten him.

Reginald Clavering entered the house, and the first sound that met his ears was something between a wail and a shout which came from the upper region. Reginald winced at the sound. His mother still held to her original Baptist faith-about the only thing pertaining to her early life which she had not meekly given up. She was at that moment enjoying the spiritual ministrations of a Baptist minister who came sometimes on Sundays to pray with her and sing camp-meeting hymns-to the intense diversion of the smart English footmen and gay French maids of whom Mrs. Clavering was in deadly fear. And to make it worse for Reginald, Anne Clavering, instead of setting her face against this unchurchmanlike proceeding, actually aided and abetted her mother in her plebeian sort of religion, and joined her clear note to the Reverend Mr. Smithers's bellowing and Mrs. Clavering's husky contralto. The whole thing offended Reginald Clavering's esthetic sense, but it was a proof that he had much that was good in him that he bore these proceedings silently as became a gentleman, a Christian and an Anglican, and made no complaint to anyone except Anne.

As he passed the open library door

Senator Clavering called out to him in that rich and melodious voice which the stenographers in the Senate gallery declared the most agreeable and easily followed voice of any member of the Senate:

"Hello! What infernally pretty woman was that you were escorting

just now?"

"Mrs. Darrell, the widowed daughter of General Brandon. General Brandon is one of the vestrymen at St. Gabriel's Chapel," replied Reginald

stiffly.

"Yes, fine old fellow. I knew him more than thirty years ago when he was a captain of infantry out on the plains, and I was a sutler, as it was called then. Handsome old chap still, and his daughter is like him. You show good taste, my boy. I thought you'd find something entertaining out at that chapel."

Reginald Clavering scorned to reply to this, but went on to his study in

another part of the house.

In a few minutes he heard his father's step on the stair, and dutifully opened the door for him. Clavering entered, threw himself in a great chair, and began to look around him with an amused smile. The room was a museum of ecclesiastical pictures and

gimcracks.

"When I was your age," said Clavering, laughing openly, "I hadn't a room like this—I shared a board shanty with a fellow from God knows where, who had served a term in State's prison—but he was the finest smelter expert I ever saw, and had the best eye for a pretty woman. You couldn't see the boards in our walls for the pictures of ballet dancers and the like. Nothing in the least like this." And he laughed.

Reginald's pale face flushed with many emotions. His father's tone and manner expressed a frank scorn for him and all his surroundings.

Clavering kept on:

"My roommate—nobody had a room to himself in those diggings—taught me how to differentiate among pretty women." Clavering was diverted at the spectacle of a man shrinking from such a discussion. "Now, of your sisters, Anne is really the best looking —the most effective, that is. Elise and Lydia are of the tulip variety. Anne is something more and different."

"Elise and Lydia are both of them strikingly like you, sir," replied

Reginald.

It was the nearest approach to sarcasm he had ever made in his life. Clavering enjoyed the cut at himself

immensely.

"Very neat, thank you. Now, I should say that Mrs.—what's her name?—old Brandon's daughter is a remarkably attractive, even beautiful woman, although she strikes me at first glance as one of those women, not exactly young, who haven't yet found themselves. Perhaps you'll show the lady the way."

"Sir," said Reginald after a pause,

"you shock me!"

Clavering was not in the least annoyed at this. He looked at Reginald as one studies an amusing specimen and said, as if to himself:

"Good God! that you should be my

son!

Clavering then took up some of the books on the table and began to turn them over, laughing silently to himself the while. The books corresponded with the pictures and ornaments.

Reginald Clavering found all of his family a cross, except his sister Anne, and his father the heaviest cross of all. He was sincerely relieved when Clavering took himself downstairs to his

own library again.

It was a handsome library, and quite what the library of a senator, if not a statesman, should be. The walls were lined with encyclopedias, histories and the English classics. Clavering, however, was a student of far more interesting documents than any ever printed in a book. He had studied unceasingly the human subject, and knew men and women as a Greek scholar knows his Sophocles. This knowledge of men had made him not only dazzlingly and superbly successful, but even happy in his way.

The most saintly man on earth might have envied James Clavering his mind, ever at ease; for he knew no morals, and was unmoral rather than immoral.

Two things only in life disturbed him. One was that he would have liked to get rid of his wife, whom he had married when he was barely twenty-one. She had served his turn. Although homely, shapeless and stupid now, she had made him comfortable-in the days when his miner's wages barely kept a humble roof over his head. She had brought her children up properly-Clavering had enough of justice in him not to hold her accountable for the fastness, the vagaries, the love of splendor, the lack of principle that made his eldest and youngest daughters the subject of frequent paragraphs in scandalous newspapers, and had landed one in the divorce court. They were like him-so Clavering admitted to himself, without a blush. His one fear was that they would, as he expressed it, "make fools of themselves." He admired chastity in women and even respected it, so far as he could feel respect for anything, and he would, if he could, have kept all the women in his family strictly virtuous. But he never was quite at ease about either Elise or Lydia; and when he saw the simple way in which Elise had slipped off the matrimonial fetters Clavering had begun to fear greatlythose two girls were so extremely like himself!

He knew well enough from whom Reginald inherited his temperament. Mrs. Clavering's father had been a weak, well-meaning Baptist preacher, and Reginald was a replica of him, plus a college education and a large allowance superadded. Where Anne came in Clavering frankly acknowledged himself beaten. She inherited his own strong will and her mother's gentleness of address. But she had an innate delicacy, a singular degree of social sense, a power of making herself felt and respected that Clavering admired, but the origin of which he could not trace. She was the one person in the world whom he feared and respected. It was due to her that the Claverings had any real social status whatever. It was through her, and for her alone, that certain honest, dignified and punctilious senators and public officials came to the grand Clavering dinners and musicals, and allowed their wives to come. It was Anne who would have to be vanquished when, as Clavering had always intended, he should get a divorce from his wife and marry again. He had not attempted this, merely because, so far, the women who would have married him he did not want or could get on easier terms, and the women he might have wanted would not have him at any price. Anne was known as her mother's champion, and Clavering knew that she would fight the divorce with all the skill, courage and pertinacity which, as Baskerville had truly said, was all she had inherited from her father. She had in her, disguised by much suavity and sweetness, a touch of aggressiveness, a noble wilfulness that would not be reasoned away. Clavering knew that the tussle of his life would come when the divorce was seriously mooted; but he was not the less ready for the tussle.

The first sight of Elizabeth Darrell had impressed him wonderfully—impressed him to the extent of making him resolve to renew his acquaintance with General Brandon; and while he was turning the mode of this over in his mind he was summoned to luncheon. At luncheon all of the family assembled—Élise and Lydia in elaborate négligées, Anne simply but properly dressed. She sat next her mother at the table and was that poor creature's only outspoken champion.

"So you had a nice morning with the psalm-singing and all that?" said Elise to Anne.

"Very nice," Anne replied. "Mama seemed to enjoy it very much."

"We had a very nice morning, too," replied Elise. "The Brentwood-Baldwins glared at us as we went into church; they will never forgive us for getting that pew in the middle aisle, so close to the President's. Then, after

church, Count Rosalka asked to walk home with me. Lydia got Laurison, the new British third secretary, so we sent the carriage on and walked out Connecticut avenue with all the Seventh street shopkeepers. It was very

amusing, though."

"It must have been," said Clavering gravely. "You must have recalled the time when you would have thought yourselves as rich as Pierpont Morgan and Rockefeller combined if you had been as well dressed as a Seventh street shopkeeper's daughter. It was only twelve years ago, you recall, since I struck pay dirt in mines and politics."

Élise and Lydia both smiled pleasantly. They were their father's own daughters, and along with many of his vices they inherited his superb good humor, which never gave way except to a preconcerted burst of imposing

wrath.

"I remember those days quite well," said Anne. Her voice, as well as her looks, was quite different from her sisters'. Instead of their rich and resonant tones, beautiful like their father's, Anne's voice had a dove-like quality of cooing softness, but she could always make herself heard.

"I remember," she continued, touching her mother's coarse hand outspread on the table, "when mama used to make our gowns, and we looked quite as nice as the girls who could afford to have their clothes made by a dress-

maker."

"Them was happy days," said Mrs. Clavering. It was her only remark

during luncheon.

They talked of their plans for the coming week, as people do to whom pleasure and leisure are new and intoxicating things. Anne was plied with questions about Mrs. Luttrell's dinner. She told freely all about it, being secretive only about Baskerville, merely mentioning that he was present.

"A more toploftical, stuck-up F.F.V. I never saw than this same Mr. Baskerville—and as dull as ditchwater be-

sides," said Lydia.

Here Reginald spoke.

"Mr. Baskerville is very highly es-

teemed by the bishop of the diocese,"

. "And by people of a good deal more brains than the bishop of the diocese," replied Clavering. "Baskerville is one of the brainiest men of his age I ever knew. He is fighting me in this K. F. R. business, but all the same I have a high opinion of his gray matter, and I wish you two girls—Elise and Lydia—knew men like Baskerville instead of foreign rapscallions and fortune-hunters like Rosalka. And I wish you went to dinners such as Anne went to last night instead of scampering over the town to all sorts of larky places with all sorts of larky people."

To this Lydia replied. So far, she had achieved neither marriage nor divorce, but she was not averse to either.

"I think the dinners Anne goes to must be precious dull. Now, our men and our parties, whatever they are, aren't dull. I never laughed so much in my life as I did at Rosalka's stories."

Clavering's face grew black. He was no better than he should be himself, and ethically he made no objection to his daughters amusing themselves in any way but one; but old prejudices and superstitions made him delicate on the one point upon which he suspected two of his daughters were the least squeamish. He said nothing, however, nor did Anne or Reginald; it was a subject none of them cared to discuss.

When luncheon was over Mrs. Clavering and Anne made ready for their early Sunday afternoon walk—a time to which Mrs. Clavering looked forward all the week and with which Anne never allowed any of her own engage-

ments to interfere.

Meanwhile Clavering himself, interested for the first time in the tall, shabby house across the way, walked out upon the broad stone steps of his own palace and watched the windows opposite, hoping for a glimpse of Elizabeth Darrell's face. While he stood there smoking and apparently engaged in the harmless enjoyment of a lovely autumn afternoon, Richard Baskerville approached. Baskerville denied himself the pleasure of seeking Anne

in her own home, but he often found himself, without his own volition, in the places where he would be likely to meet her, and so he was walking along the street in which she lived. Seeing Clavering on the steps Baskerville would have passed with a cool nod, but Clavering stopped him; and the younger man, thinking Anne Clavering might be within sight or might appear, compromised with his conscience and entered into conversation with Clavering. It was always an effort on Baskerville's part to avoid Clavering, whose extraordinary charm of manner and personality was a part of his capital. Baskerville, deep in the study of Clavering's career, felt a genuine curiosity about the man and how he did things and what he really thought of himself and his own doings. He reckoned Clavering to be a colossal and very attractive scoundrel, whom he was earnestly seeking to destroy; and his relations were further complicated with Clavering by the fact that Anne Clavering was-a very interesting woman. This Baskerville admitted to himself; he had got that far on the road to love.

The senator, with the brilliant smile which made him handsomer than ever,

said to Baskerville:

"We may as well enjoy the privilege of speaking before you do me up in the matter of those K. F. R. land grants."

The younger man cleverly avoided shaking hands with Clavering, but re-

plied, also smiling:

"Your attorneys say we sha'n't be

able to do you up, senator."

"I hope they're right. I swear, in that business the amount of lying and perjury, if placed on end, would reach to the top of the Washington Monument. Have a cigar?"

Such indeed was Baskerville's own view of the lying and perjury, but he opined that it was all on Senator Clavering's side, and he was trying to prove

it.

He got out of taking one of Clavering's cigars—for he was nice upon points of honor—by taking a cigarette out of his case.

"I don't know what you youngsters are coming to," said Clavering, as he smoked. "Cigarettes and vermouth, and that sort of thing, instead of a good strong cigar and four fingers of whisky."

"I was on the football team at the university for three terms, and we had to lead lives like boarding-school misses," replied Baskerville, toying with his cigarette. "Our coach was about the stiffest man against whisky and cigars I ever knew-and used to preach to us seven days in the week that a couple of cigars a day and four fingers of whisky would shortly land any fellow at the undertaker's. I fell from grace, it is true, directly I was graduated, but that coach's gruesome predictions have stuck to me like the shirt of Nemesis, as your colleague, Senator Jephson, said the other day on the floor of the Senate."

"Jephson's an ass. He is the sort of man that would define a case of mixed property as a suit for a mule."

"Hardly. And he's an honest old

blunderbuss."

"Still, he's an ass, as I say. His honesty doesn't prevent that."

"Well, yes, in a way, it does. I'm not a professional moralist, but I don't believe there is any really good substitute for honesty."

Then Baskerville suddenly turned red; the discussion of honesty with a man whose dishonesty he firmly believed in, and was earnestly trying to prove, was a blunder into which he did not often fall. Clavering, who saw everything, noted the other's flush, understood it perfectly and smiled in

appreciation of the joke.

Baskerville did not propose to emphasize his mistake by running away, and was prepared to stay some minutes longer, when the entrance doors were swung open by the gorgeous footman, and Mrs. Clavering, leaning upon Anne's arm, appeared for a walk. When he saw his wife Clavering's face grew dark; that old woman, with her bad grammar and her big hands, was always in his way. He said good morning abruptly and went indoors at once,

Anne greeted Baskerville with a charming smile, and introduced him at once to her mother. Something in his manner to Mrs. Clavering revealed the antique respect he had for every decent woman, no matter how unattractive she might be. He assisted Mrs. Clavering down the great stone steps as if she were a young and pretty girl instead of a lumbering, ignorant, elderly woman, and Mrs. Clavering found courage to address him, a thing she rarely did to strangers.

"I guess," she said diffidently, "you've got an old mother of your own that you help up and down—you do

it so easy."

"No; I wish I had," answered Baskerville, with a kindness in his voice that both the old woman and the young one felt. "My mother has been dead a long time; but I have a fine old aunt, Mrs. Luttrell, who makes me fetch and carry like an expressman's horse, and then she says I am not half so attentive to her as I ought to be. Perhaps Miss Clavering has told you about her—I had the pleasure of dining with Miss Clavering at my aunt's last night."

"Yes, she did, and she told me you were all real nice," answered Mrs. Clavering—and was appalled at her

own daring.

Anne and Baskerville talked about the dinner, as they walked along the sunny, quiet street. Anne had enjoyed every moment spent in Mrs. Luttrell's house, and said so. Mrs. Clavering walked with difficulty, but the young man's arm at the street-crossings was a real assistance to her; and without talking down to Mrs. Clavering, or embarrassing her by direct remarks, he skilfully included her in the conversation.

Mrs. Clavering felt increasingly comfortable. Here was a man who did not scorn a woman because she was old and plain. For once the poor woman did not feel in the way with another person besides Anne. She ventured several commonplace remarks, to all of which Baskerville listened with pleasant courtesy. He began to see in this ordinary,

uneducated woman a certain hint of attractiveness in her gentleness of voice and softness of eyes that were reflected and intensified in the slim and graceful daughter by her side. Anne turned her soft, expressive eyes-her only real beauty-on Baskerville with a look of gratitude in them. Her life at home was one long fight for her mother's happiness and dignity, for whom no one of her family had the least respect. except herself and her brother Reginald; and Reginald was but a poor creature in many ways. If Baskerville had sat up all night for a month trying to devise a plan to ingratiate himself with Anne Clavering he could not have done it better than by his courtesy to her mother. And he, appreciating the strong affection, the courage, the absence of false pride, the unselfishness of Anne Clavering in this particular, admired her the more.

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As they walked slowly along and talked, a kind of intimacy seemed to spring into being between them. Gratitude is a strong incentive to regard on both sides, and Baskerville's attitude toward Mrs. Clavering touched Anne to the heart. Their objective point was Dupont Circle, which at that hour was tolerably free from the colored gentry and the baby carriages which make it populous eighteen hours out of the twenty-four. But Mrs. Clavering was destined to receive further distinguished attention during that episode of the walk. When she was seated comfortably on a bench Baskerville proposed to Anne that he show her, on the other side of the Circle, a silver maple tree in great autumnal glory.

"Now, do go, my dear," said Mrs. Clavering; "I'd like to set here awhile. Do, Mr. Baskerville, take her off—she ain't left me an hour this day, and she oughter have a little pleasure."

"Come, obey your mother," Baskerville said, and Anne, smiling, walked off with him. Mrs. Clavering, good soul, was like other mothers, and as her darling child went off with Baskerville she thought:

"How nice them two look together! And he is such a civil-spoken, sensible young man. Anne deserves a good

husband-and if-"

This train of thought was interrupted by General Brandon. He, too, after his luncheon, was out for a Sunday airing, and passing the bench on which Mrs. Clavering sat, the good woman, with new-found courage, looked up at him and actually ventured upon a timid bow. She had recognized him from the first time she had seen him, when she moved into their new and splendid house; and she had a perfectly clear recollection of the old sutler days, when General Brandon was a handsome young captain, who always had a polite word for the sutler's wife. But she had never before, in the two years they had lived opposite each other, had the courage to speak to him. Her success with Baskerville emboldened her, and as General Brandon made her an elaborate, old-fashioned bow Mrs. Clavering said:

"This used to be Cap'n Brandon—a long time ago, just before the war

broke out."

"Yes, madam," replied General Brandon; "and you, I believe, are Mrs. Clavering? I remember quite well when Mr. Clavering brought you, a

blooming bride, to the post."

Mrs. Clavering sighed. She was so lonely in the big house, so continually snubbed by her husband, by her daughters Elise and Lydia, by the uppish footman and the giggling maids; she was so cut off from everything she had ever known before that the sight of persons connected with those early days was like water in the desert to her. She smiled a deprecating smile, and answered:

"I've seen you on the street often enough. You live opposite our house,

don't vou?"

"Yes," said General Brandon. Then Mrs. Clavering made a faint indication that he should sit down, and he placed himself on the bench by her side.

"I recognized both you and Senator Clavering," said the general, "but as neither of you showed any recollection of me I hesitated to speak."

Mrs. Clavering sighed.

"You are the first person since I come to Washington that I ever seen as far back as them days at the army

post."

General Brandon, the most chivalrous of men, saw in Mrs. Clavering the timid longing to talk about old days and old ways, and he himself had a fondness for reminiscences; so the pair of old fogies entered into talk, feeling a greater degree of acquaintanceship in meeting after that long stretch of years than they had ever known before. When Anne and Baskerville returned, twenty minutes later, quite an active conversation was going on.

"Anne, my dear," said Mrs. Clavering, actually in a self-possessed manner, "this is General Brandon, who lives opposite our house. I knew him in them old times at the army post—and he's got a daughter, a widder, come home from England to live with him. Anne, you must go and call on her."

"I shall, with much pleasure," replied Anne, bestowing on General Brandon her charming smile. Then, after a little more talk, it was time to return. General Brandon gallantly offered Mrs. Clavering his arm, and the poor lady, embarrassed but pleased, was escorted with courtly grace to her door. Anne and Baskerville had meanwhile made vast strides in intimacy. It was not, however, enough for Anne to repeat her invitation to call, but Mrs. Clavering, when she arrived at the house which was by courtesy hers plucked up extraordinary courage and said:

"I hope, Mr. Baskerville, you will favor us with your company on Thursday, which is our receiving day. General Brandon has promised to come and I'll be real disappointed if you

don't come, too."

It was the first invitation that Mrs. Clavering had ever given on her own initiative, and she gave it so diffidently, and in such simple good faith, that a man would have been a brute to decline it. So Baskerville accepted it with thanks, wondering meanwhile whether he were not a rascal in so doing. But he wanted very much to see Anne

Clavering as often as he could, and the Montague and Capulet act came to him quite naturally and agreeably—the more so when he saw the gleam of gratification in Anne's eyes at his acceptance. She said simply:

"I shall be glad to see you." And then, turning to General Brandon, she added: "We shall, I hope, have the pleasure then of meeting Mrs. Darrell."

"My dear young lady, you are most kind," answered General Brandon, "but my daughter is so lately widowed—not yet a year and a half—that I feel sure it will be quite impossible to her feelings for her to appear at all in society now. Nevertheless, I shall give her your kind invitation, and she will be most gratified. I shall do myself the honor and pleasure of attending."

And then they parted, Anne and Baskerville each reckoning that day to have been one of the pleasantest of their lives, and wondering when they should have the good fortune to meet in that sweet, companionable

manner again.

IV

At dinner that night General Brandon told Elizabeth about his meeting with Mrs. Clavering and the renewal

of their acquaintance.

"The poor lady seemed much pleased at meeting someone associated with her former life," said General Brandon. "She invited me to call on Thursday, which is their first reception day of the season, and especially urged that you should come. I believe their receptions are large and brilliant; the newspapers are always full of them; so I told her that owing to your very recent mourning it would be impossible for you to go to any large or gay entertainment. I have no doubt Sara Luttrell will ask you to many of her parties—she keeps a very gay house—and it is a source of the keenest regret to me that you cannot for the present accept invitations. But another winter I shall hope, my dear child, that you will have the

spirit to enter once more into the society you are so admirably fitted to adorn."

Good General Brandon was quite unconscious that in the society to which Elizabeth had been accustomed a year was considered the period of a widow's mourning. He never dreamed for one moment that she could have been induced to go into society at that time. As a matter of fact, it was the one thing which Elizabeth really hoped might rouse her from the torpor of mind and heart into which she had sunk in the last few months. She had a good and comprehensive mind, not much improved by reading, since her whole time during her married life had been taken up with the incessant round of small gaieties which prevail at most military posts. Then had come that year in London, in which she had really seen the best English society and had liked it, as everyone must who knows it. Society had become a habit, although very far from a passion with her, and she had expected to return to it, as one resumes one's daily habits. She had taken a strange interest in the Claverings from the very beginning-they constituted her very first impressions of Washington; and she would have found some diversion from her sad and wearying thoughts in Mrs. Luttrell's brilliant and interesting house. But it was impossible for her to go against her father's implied ideas of propriety. He had always assumed that she was properly and dutifully heartbroken at her husband's death. She did indeed mourn good, brave, honest, stupid Jack Darrell as a woman mourns a husband for whom she feels gratitude and tenderness, without being in the least in love with him; all the sentiment which belongs to love she had secretly and hopelessly given to Pelham. often thought if she had not been so young, so ignorant, she never would have married Darrell.

"I think you should force yourself, however painful it may be to your feelings, to go to see Sara Luttrell some day when she is not formally receiving," said General Brandon, thinking he was proposing a tremendous sacrifice to Elizabeth, and he felt quite triumphant when she agreed to go.

When the Thursday afternoon came there was no need to tell Elizabeth that the Clavering receptions were large and brilliant. By four o'clock carriages came pouring into the street, and by five there was almost an impasse. Great numbers of stylish men, both foreigners and Americans, passed

in and out the splendid doors. While Elizabeth was watching this procession with curious interest Mrs. Luttrell's great old-fashioned coach, with the long-tailed black horses, stopped before the tall, shabby house, and Serena brought up Mrs. Luttrell's and Baskerville's cards. Mrs. Luttrell, although militant, was not the sort of woman to hit another woman when she was down, and she was most gracious when Elizabeth appeared. The sight of the dingy drawing-room, of Elizabeth's pallor and evident signs of stress and trial touched Mrs. Luttrell. She mentioned to Elizabeth that a card would be sent her for a large dinner which she was giving within a fortnight, and when Elizabeth gently declined Mrs. Luttrell was really sorry. Baskerville was sincerely cordial. He had liked Elizabeth as a girl, and her forlornness now touched him as it did Mrs. Luttrell.

When their visit was over and they were once more out of the house Mrs. Luttrell exclaimed:

"That's Dick Brandon's doings—that poor Elizabeth not going a place and moping in that hole of a house. If she would but go about a bit, and leave her card at the British Embassy, where she would certainly be invited, she could see something of society and recover her spirits and good looks. By the way, I think she's really more enticing in her pallor and her black gown than when she was in the flush of her beauty. Of course, she looks much older. Now, as I'm going into the Claverings' I suppose you will leave me."

Baskerville, with a hangdog look, replied:

"I'm going into the Claverings' too."

Mrs. Luttrell's handsome mouth came open, and her ermine cape fell from her shoulders without her even so much as knowing it.

"Yes," said Baskerville, assuming a bullying air, now that the cat was out of the bag, "Mrs. Clavering asked me last Sunday, and I accepted."

"Where on earth, Richard Bas—?"
"Did I see Mrs. Clavering? I met her out walking with Miss Clavering. Mrs. Clavering is a most excellent woman—quiet and unobtrusive—and I swear there is something of her in Miss Clavering."

"Richard Baskerville, you are in love with Anne Clavering! I know it; I feel it."

"Don't be a fool, Sara Luttrell. Because I happen to pay a visit at a house where I have been asked and could have gone a year ago, you at once discover a mare's nest. That's Sara Luttrell all over."

"And what becomes of the doubtful propriety of your going to Senator Clavering's house? And suppose you succeed in driving him out of public life, as you are trying to do?"

"I swear you are the most provoking old woman in Washington. Hold your tongue, and come along with your dutiful nephew."

Grasping her firmly by the arm, Baskerville marched Mrs. Luttrell up the broad stone steps of the Clavering house.

The splendid doors were opened noiselessly by gorgeous footmen, who looked like the prize-winners at a chrysanthemum show. The entrance was magnificent and through the half-drawn silken draperies of the wide doorways they could see the whole superb suite of rooms opening upon the large Moorish hall. Great masses of flowers were everywhere, and the mellow glow of wax lights and tinted lamp globes made the autumn twilight softly radiant.

Half a dozen butterfly debutantes

were serving tea in the huge diningroom, furnished with priceless teakwood and black oak, bright with pictures and mirrors, a magnificent Turkish carpet on the parquet floor and chandeliers from a royal palace lighting the dim splendor of the room. Here, brilliant with candelabra, was set out a great table, from which an expensive collation was served by more gorgeous footmen. This was the doing of Elise and Lydia, who overruled Anne's desire for a simple tea table set in the library. There, however, a great gold and silver bowl was constantly replenished with champagne punch, and over this Elise and Lydia presided, much preferring the champagne bowl to the tea table.

The library was thronged with men, old and young, native and foreign. Elise and Lydia, their handsome faces flushed and smiling, their elaborate gowns iridescent with gold and silver embroidery and spangles sweeping the floor, laughed, talked and flirted to their hearts' content. They also drank punch with a great many men who squeezed their hands on the sly, looked into their large dark eyes and always

went away laughing.

Mrs. Luttrell, escorted by Baskerville, and meeting acquaintances at every turn, entered the great drawingroom, which was a symphony in green and gold. Near the door Anne Clavering, in a simple gray gown, stood by her mother, who was seated. Anne received the guests, and then introduced them to Mrs. Clavering, who made the pretense of receiving, looking the picture of misery meanwhile. The poor soul would much rather have remained upstairs, but on this point Anne was inexorable—her mother must show herself in her own drawing-room. A handsome black gown, appropriate to an elderly lady, showed Mrs. Clavering at her best, and Anne, with perfect taste, grace and patience, silently demanded and received for her mother the respect which was due her and which there was occasionally some difficulty in exacting.

As Anne caught sight of Mrs. Lut-

trell she smiled with obvious pleasure, but on seeing Baskerville her face lighted up in a way which by no means escaped Mrs. Luttrell's sharp eyes.

Mrs. Clavering was nearly frightened out of her life on the rare occasions when the redoubtable Mrs. Luttrell called, but on this afternoon Mrs. Luttrell was as soft as milk and as sweet as honey. But Mrs. Clavering was not the least afraid of Baskerville, and said to him earnestly, as he took her hand:

"I'm real glad to see you."

"And I am very glad to be able to come," answered Baskerville. Then, seating himself by her side, he began to talk to her so gently, on subjects the poor lady was interested in that she was more delighted with him than ever. A soft flush came into Anne's delicate cheeks; she appreciated the sweet and subtle flattery in Baskerville's attitude. It was not interest in Mrs. Clavering's conversation, nor even the pity he might have felt for her forlorn condition which induced him to spend twenty minutes of his visit in talking to her.

Meantime the dusk was deepening. Many visitors were departing and few coming. Mrs. Luttrell was entertaining a select coterie of men around the large fireplace at the other end of the room, and Baskerville was the only person left near Anne and Mrs. Clav-

ering

"Will you be kind enough," he said to Anne, "to go with me to get a cup of tea? I see a table in yonder, but I am afraid of so many young girls at once. I think I can count six of them. Now, if you will go with me I shall feel as brave as a lion."

The temptation was strong, but Anne looked down at her mother. Apprehension was written on Mrs. Clavering's simple, homely face at the

notion of being left alone.

"Why can't Mr. Baskerville have his tea with me?" said she. "There ain't any more folks coming. Make Peer bring a table here, Anne, and we'll have it comfortable together."

"Yes," Baskerville added, drawing

up a chair. "Mrs. Clavering is far more amiable and hospitable than you. I am sure you would never have thought of so kind a solution."

Anne, with a happy smile, gave Pierre the order, and in a minute they were sitting about a little table, with an opportunity for a few minutes talk at a moderate pitch of voice differing from those hurried, merry meetings in a crowd of laughing, talking, moving people which usually constitute a

Washington call.

While they were sitting there, all three enjoying themselves, and Mrs. Clavering not the least of the three, a belated caller was announced, General Brandon. The general was in his Sunday frock coat, which had seen good service, and his silk hat which belonged by rights on the retired list; but each was carefully brushed and clearly belonged to a gentleman. General Brandon himself, handsome, soldierly, his white mustache and hair neatly clipped, was grace, elegance and amiability personified. His head was none of the best, but for beauty, courage and gentleness he was unmatched.

Anne received him with more than her usual cordiality, and Mrs. Clavering was so pleased at seeing him that she actually invited him to sit down at her tea table and have tea. This he did, explaining why his daughter had sent her cards instead of coming.

"Another year, I hope, my dear madam, my daughter may be persuaded to re-enter society, which, if you will pardon a father's pride, I think she adorns. But at present she is overwhelmed with grief at her loss—it is scarcely eighteen months since she became a widow and lost the best of husbands."

General Brandon prattled on, and presently said:

"I had hoped to meet Senator Clavering here this afternoon, and made my visit late on purpose. His exacting senatorial duties, however, must leave him little time for social relaxation."

"I think I hear his step in the hall

now," said Anne. "He will, I know, be very much pleased to meet you

As she spoke Clavering's firm tread was heard, and he entered, smiling, debonair and distinguished-looking. Nobody would have dreamed from anything in his air or looks that this man was nearing a crisis in his fate, and that even then his conduct was being revealed in the newspapers and examined by his fellow-senators in a way which opened a wide, straight vista to State's prison.

Clavering was surprised, but undeniably pleased, and even amused at seeing Baskerville; and Baskerville felt like a hound, and inwardly swore at himself for letting the wish to see a woman's eyes bring him to Clavering's house. He put a bold face upon it, however, shook Clavering's outstretched hand and called himself a fool and a rogue for so doing.

The warmth of Clavering's greeting to General Brandon delighted the simple old general. Clavering, who had too much sound sense to avoid allusions to his early life of to tell lies about it, recalled the time when he was a sutler and General Brandon was an officer. Then he carried the latter off to an alcove in the library, which was now deserted, except by Elise and Lydia. These two young women, reclining like odalisques among the cushions of a luxurious sofa, discussed Rosalka and the rest of their swains in low voices and in terms which luckily their father did not overhear.

Into the alcove Clavering caused his choicest brands of whisky and cigars to be brought, and at once plunged into talk, and into that talk infused all his powers of pleasing, which soon produced upon the simple old general a species of intoxication. If anyone had told him that Clavering's attentions were due to the sight, more than once obtained since Sunday, of Elizabeth Darrell's graceful figure and interesting, melancholy face, General Brandon would have called that person a liar.

"You know," said Clavering, as soon as the two were comfortably established with the whisky and cigars, "that I am being badgered and bothered by a set of sharks, calling themselves lawyers, who want to rob me of every dollar of my fortune. You have perhaps read in the newspapers something about this K. F. R. land grant business."

"I am aware the public prints have given considerable space to it," replied General Brandon, "but I have no knowledge of the merits of the

case."

"Neither have the newspapers. The long and short of it is that the sharks, after fighting me through every court in the country, where I may say I have managed to hold my own pretty well, have managed by political wirepulling to get a Senate committee to investigate the matter. Now, I don't want to be lacking in senatorial courtesy, but of all the collection of asses, dunderheads and old women, sneaks, hypocrites and sniveling dogs that ever were huddled together, that select committee of my esteemed contemporaries. Good Lord! let's take a drink."

General Brandon drank solemnly. Whisky of that brand was not to be

treated lightly.

"I know well all the country embraced in and contiguous to that K. F. R. land grant," said the general, putting down his glass reverently. scouted and fought and hunted over all that region more than forty years ago, when I was a young lieutenant just turned loose from West Point."

"Why, then," cried Clavering, his handsome eyes lighting up, "you might be of real service to me." He did not specify what manner of service he meant, and General Brandon innocently thought Clavering meant about the K. F. R. land grant. But no man who ever lived could tell Clavering anything he did not know about any piece of property he had ever owned; least of all could simple, guileless General Brandon tell him anything.

"I should be most happy," replied

the general. "I have a considerable quantity of memoranda, maps and surveys of the region which are quite at your service."

"Capital!" said Clavering, his deep eyes shining with a keen delight. "Now, as the investigation is going on, which you have seen in the newspapers, I shall have to make immediate use of any information you might be able to give me. Suppose you were to let me come over to your house tonight and take our first view of what you have? And of course you'll stay and dine with me.'

"I thank you very much, senator, but I cannot leave my daughter to dine alone-she is too much alone, poor child. And immediately after dinner I am engaged to spend an hour with an old friend, General Mayse, a former classmate of mine who is now afflicted with paralysis and to whom I pay a weekly visit. Besides, I should have to rummage among my papers to find those that we require. But tomorrow night I shall be at your service."

But it was not Clavering's nature to delay the accomplishment of any wish. He wanted to see and know Elizabeth Darrell, so he said cordially:

"At all events I should like to talk the matter over with you. Would you allow me to come in this evening, then, after you have returned from your visit?"

"Certainly, senator. I shall be at

home by half-after nine."

Then Clavering, seeing that General Brandon was his, began to talk about other things, even to hint at chances To this General of making money. Brandon only sighed and said:

"Those enterprises are for men with capital. I have only the equity in my house and my salary, and I cannot, for my daughter's sake, jeopardize what little I have. She was left with but a small provision from her husband's estate, which was strictly entailed."

Clavering could not refrain from smiling at General Brandon's simplicity in refusing such an offer, if even but a hint, for such a reason; but he said no

more on the subject.

As the general passed into the drawing-room to say good-bye to Mrs. Clavering he was surprised to find Baskerville still sitting at the tea table. Baskerville had not been asked to stay to dinner, but when Mrs. Luttrell was ready to leave a very mild invitation from Mrs. Clavering, who had no notion of the duration of fashionable visits, had made him ask permission to remain—a permission which Mrs. Luttrell gave with a wink. Anne was not displeased with him for staying-her eyes and smile conveyed as much, and, man-like, Baskerville had succumbed to the temptation. when General Brandon came in and found him the very last visitor in the drawing-room he felt himself distinctly caught, and made his farewells with more haste than grace. Mrs. Clavering urged him to come again, and Anne's tones conveyed auf Wiedersehen to him as eloquently as a tone can without specific words; nevertheless, when Baskerville found himself out in the cool, crisp night he began to doubt, as he had ever doubted, the propriety of his going to Senator Clavering's house at all. But General Brandon was saying to him most earnestly, as they stood under the lamppost before going their different ways:

"Senator Clavering is a very cruelly maligned man; of that I am certain. And I think, Mr. Baskerville, that most of the testimony you and the Civil Service League and the K. F. R. attorneys have collected will break down when it is introduced before the committee. Why, Senator Clavering tells me that he has been accused of wholesale bribery, of having bought his seat in the Senate, of having bought up courts and legislatures on evidence that wouldn't hang a dog. But he will be triumphantly vindicated—I

make no doubt at all of that."

"I wish he might be," replied Baskerville, with a degree of sincerity that would scarcely have been credited; "but I don't think he can be."

When General Brandon let himself

into his own house dinner was ready to be served. He was full of enthusiasm about the Claverings. At the table he assured Elizabeth of his entire belief in Clavering and of his respect for him. Mrs. Clavering he pronounced to be a most excellent and unpretending woman, Anne altogether admirable, Reginald Clavering a worthy fellow and Élise Denman and Lydia Clavering two much abused young women, in whom mere high spirits and unconventionality had been mistaken for a degree of imprudence of which he felt sure they could never be guilty. Then he mentioned Clavering's proposed visit, and asked Elizabeth if she would, the next day, find the trunk in which he kept certain papers, open it and get out of it everything dated between '56 and '61.

When dinner was over and General Brandon had gone out to pay his weekly visit to his sick friend, Elizabeth went upstairs to a small back room, called by courtesy the study. Here were General Brandon's few books; he was not and had never been a man of books, but he liked to be considered bookish. There was in the room an open grate fire, a student's lamp and some old-fashioned tables and easy-chairs. To this room Elizabeth had succeeded in imparting an air of comfort. She sat down before the fire to spend the evening alone, as she had spent so many evenings alone in the last eighteen months, and would, she feared, continue to spend them for the rest of her life. She had expected to find her life in Washington dull, but the weeks she had been at home had been duller than she had thought possible. Her father's old friends had called upon her, but they were all staid and elderly persons, and the circle had grown pitifully small in her ten years of absence. Those ten years had practically obliterated her own acquaintances in the ever changing population of Washington, and the few persons left in the gay world whom she knew, like Mrs. Luttrell, it was plain that her father did not expect her to cultivate.

One resource-reading-occurred to

her on this particular evening. She had a mind well fitted for books, but she had never been thrown with bookish people, and reading had formed no essential part of her life. Pelham was a man of great intelligence, and a reader; but both his intelligence and his reading were somewhat confined to his profession. No matter where Elizabeth's thinking began. Pelham was sure to come into it somewhere. She started up from her chair as the recollection of him, which always hovered near her, took shape in thought and almost in speech, and going to the bookcase took out the first volume her hand fell upon. It was an old translation of Herodotus, and Elizabeth, determined upon a mental opiate, opened it at random and read on resolutely. She fell upon that wonderful story of Cyrus, the reputed son of Mithradates the herdsman; and in following the grandly simple old narrative, told with so much of art, of grace, of convincing perspicacity that not even a translation can wholly destroy its majestic beauty, Elizabeth lost herself in the shadowy, ancient past. She was roused by Serena's voice and Serena's hand, as black as the Ethiopians in Herodotus's time who worshiped no other gods save Jupiter and Bacchus. Serena produced a card. It was simple and correct, and read: "Mr. James Clavering," with the address.
"It is Senator Clavering," said

"It is Senator Clavering," said Elizabeth in a moment. "Tell him that General Brandon is not at home."

"De gent'mun seh he got er 'p'intment wid de gin'l, an' he gwine ter wait fer him. I thinks, Miss 'Liz'beth, you better lemme ax him up heah. De parlor is jes' freezin' col'," answered Serena, who never forgot that people should be made comfortable.

"Ask him up, then," replied Eliza-

beth.

She was somewhat flurried at the thought of receiving Clavering alone, but there was no help for it.

In a few minutes Serena ushered Clavering into the room. At close range he was even more attractive than at a distance. It was difficult to associate any idea of advancing age with him. Maturity was all that was indicated by his handsome, smoothshaven face, his compact and elegant figure, his iron-gray hair. Manual labor had left but one mark upon him—his hands were rough and marred by the miner's tools he had used. He was perfectly well dressed and perfectly at his ease. He introduced himself with the natural and unaffected grace which had been his along with his sutler's license and miner's tools.

"This, I presume, is Mrs. Darrell. I thank you very much for allowing me to wait for General Brandon's return."

He said no word about his appointment with General Brandon being at half-after nine while then it was only

a little past eight.

Elizabeth invited him to sit down. and herself took a seat opposite him. The color which came into her pale face very much enhanced her looks, and Clavering thought he had never seen so interesting a woman. Her slender black figure unconsciously assumed a pose of singular grace and ease, the delicate color mounted slowly into her pale cheeks, and she was indeed worthy of any man's notice. And as her personality had struck Clavering with great force at the very first glimpse he had of her, so, seeing her close at hand and her attention fixed on himself, she overpowered him quickly, as the warm, sweet scent of the jessamine flower is overpowering. It was what he would have called, had he been thirty years younger, love at first sight. Clavering's coming into the room was, like some new, strong force, making itself felt over everything. The small room seemed full of him and nothing else. He was by nature a dominant personality, and he dominated Elizabeth Darrell as strangely and suddenly as she had cast a spell over him.

"My father will regret very much not being here when you came. Perhaps he misunderstood the hour of

your appointment," she said.

Clavering's white teeth shone in a

"Don't trouble about that. Besides, it has given me the pleasure of seeing you."

Elizabeth was not unmindful of the fact that Clavering was a married man, with a wife across the street; and his words, which would have been merely those of courtesy in most men, could not be so interpreted, for Clavering was not a man of pretty speeches.

He picked up the volume of Herodotus which lay on the table.

"So you've been reading old Herodotus! That's pretty heavy reading for a young woman, isn't it?"

"I took it up at random just now, and became interested in it," answered Elizabeth.

"You are a great reader, I sup-

pose?"

"N-no. Hardly, that is. But I am very much alone, and I have read a good deal since I have returned to America."

"Why should a woman like you be alone? Why shouldn't you go about and see people and live like other

women of your age?"

Elizabeth made no reply to this; she could scarcely admit that her seclusion was more of her father's doing than her own. She was struck by the beauty of Clavering's voice and by the correctness of his speech, which was better than that of many college-bred men.

"How long have you been a widow?" he asked.

"A year and a half."

"And have you any children?"

"No. I lost my only child when he was a baby."

"That's hard on a woman. You women never forget those dead babies. But all your life is before you yet."

"It seems to me it is all behind me."
"Why? Did you love your husband

very much?"

Elizabeth had suffered Clavering's questions partly through surprise and partly because Clavering could say and do what he chose. But the

question put to her was so unexpected—it had never been asked of her before—it was so searching, that it completely disconcerted her. She remained silent, while her eyes, turned upon Clavering, wore a look of trouble and uncertainty.

"A great many women don't love their husbands," said Clavering, "and if they are left widows their feelings are very complex. They think they ought to grieve for their husbands,

but they don't."

The color dropped suddenly out of Elizabeth's cheeks. Clavering's words fitted her case so exactly and so suddenly that she was startled and frightened. It was as if he had looked into her soul and read at a glance her inmost secrets. She half-expected him to say next that she had loved another man than her husband. And as for applying the common rules of behavior to a man like Clavering, it was absurd on the face of it.

He was leaning toward Elizabeth, his elbow on the arm of his chair, his eyes fixed upon her with a kind of admiring scrutiny. He found her quite as interesting as he had expected, and he ardently desired to know more about her and, what is as great a mark of interest, to tell her more

about himself.

Elizabeth remained silent for awhile, and then forced herself to say:

"My husband was one of the best of men. He was as good as my

father."

"That settles it," replied Clavering, with grim humor. "I never knew a woman in my life who spoke of her husband's goodness first who was really in love with him. When a woman is in love with a man it isn't his goodness she thinks of first; it is his love. Now, don't fly off at that; I'm not a conventional man, and you must know it if you ever heard of me before. And I don't mean to be disrespectful. On the contrary, I want your good opinion-I have wanted it ever since the first time I saw you. I was very much struck with you then. I wanted to know you and I planned to know you. Have I committed any crime?"

"But—but—you are a married

man," said Elizabeth.

Clavering laughed as he replied: "That's downright schoolgirlish. Any boarding-school miss would say the same. Well, I can't help it now that I married a woman totally unsuited to me before I was twenty-one years old. Come, Mrs. Darrell, we are not children. I wanted to know you, I say, and I always try to do what I want to do; don't you-doesn't everybody? Well, let us then know each other. I swear to you I know less of women than I do of any subject I have ever tried to master. True, I never had time until lately, and besides, I was a middle-aged man before I ever met any educated and intelligent women. In the class of life from which I spring women are household drudges and bearers of children, and I never knew them in any other aspect until I was over forty years of age. Then you can't imagine what a stunning revelation to me a woman was who had never done anything but amuse herself and improve herself. Suppose you had never met any educated men until now? Wouldn't you find them very captivating?"

When a man talks to a woman as she has never been talked to before he is certain of finding an interested listener and, it follows, a tolerant listener. So Elizabeth could not disguise her interest in Clavering, nor was it worth while to pretend to be offended with him. The superficial knowledge she had of the vicissitudes of his life was calculated to arouse and fix her attention; and there was so little to do in her present life that she would have been more or less than mortal if she had turned from the first object of interest she had yet met with in her new and changed and

dreary life.

She paused awhile before answering

Clavering's last question.

"I dare say I should feel so," she answered. "I remember how it was when I was first married and went to India. Everything interested me. I could not see a native without wanting to ask all manner of questions of him and about him, which of course I could not be allowed to do, and the life there is so strange—their race problem is so different from ours, and all my modes of thought had to be changed. I was in India over eight years, and it was as strange to me when I left it as when I arrived."

Elizabeth had got the talk away from the personal note upon which Clavering had pitched it, and he, seeing he had said enough for a beginning. followed Elizabeth's conversational lead. He asked her many questions about her life in India, all singularly intelligent and well put, because drinking at the fountain of other people's talk had been his chief source of education during his whole life. And Clavering, without being widely read, was far from being an ignorant man. Although he knew not a word of any language except his own, nor the history of any country except his own, he was well acquainted with the history of his own times, and he knew who every living man of importance in his own country and Europe was, and what he was doing. Seeing that Elizabeth was susceptible to the charms of conversation and had a distinct intellectual side, Clavering appealed to her on that side. He told her with an inimitable raciness and humor some of the incidents of his early life in the West, his later adventures, even of his career in the Senate.

"I think I never worked so hard in my life as I have during the five years I've been in the Senate," he said. "No man can come to the Senate of the United States with the education of a sutler, miner, promoter, speculator and what-not—such as I have had—and not work hard; that is, if he expects to be anything else than a dummy. But it isn't in James Clavering to be a dummy anywhere. So I have thought and read and worked and slaved, and bought other men's brains in the last five years as earnestly as any man ever did. The result is that when I open my

mouth now the senators listen. first the lawyers in the Senate used to hide a grin when I began to speak, and I admit I did make some bad breaks in the beginning. But I saw my way out of that clearly enough. I found a man who was really a great constitutional lawyer, although he had never been able to make more than a bare living out of his profession in Chicago. I have always invested liberally in brains. When you can actually buy brains or news you are buying the two most valuable commodities on earth. Well, when I took up a question I had my man go over the legal aspects of it and put it down in black and white. Then I knew well enough how to use it, and I may say without boasting that I have done as well, or better, than any man of my opportunities now in the Senate. However, I don't compare myself with such men as Andrew Johnson. · You know his wife taught him to write, and that man rose to be President of the United States. Of course he wasn't what you would call a scholarly man, like many of the senators, but good Lord! think of the vast propelling force that took an illiterate man from a tailor's bench and gave him such a career as Andrew Johnson, and made him Vice-President of the United States. Those men-and men like me, too-can't be called all-round men. like Senator Thorndyke, for example. All of us have got great big gaps and holes in our knowledge and judgment and conduct that the normal, welleducated man hasn't. But where we are strong, we are stronger than they. Do you know anything about Thorndyke?"

"I have heard my father speak of Mrs. Thorndyke, whose family he knew many years ago, and he visits occasionally at Senator Thorndyke's. Mrs. Thorndyke sent me a request that I would call to see her—but—but—I

don't pay any visits now."

"It's a shame you don't—a woman like you. Mrs. Thorndyke is charming, but not so charming as you. And I lay claim to great nobility of soul when I praise Mrs. Thorndyke, or

Thorndyke either, for that matter. Mrs. Thorndyke has no use for me or for anybody of my name, except my second daughter. And Thorndyke, although he isn't leading the pack of hounds who are baying after me to get me out of the Senate, is quietly giving them the scent. Yet I swear I admire Thorndyke—or, rather, I admire his education and training, which have made him what he is. If I had had that training—a gentleman for my father, a lady for my mother, association with the sons of gentlemen and ladies, a university education, and then had married a lady—"

Clavering got up and took a turn about the narrow room; finally he came and sat down in a chair closer to

Elizabeth and continued:

"Thorndyke is one of the lawyers in the Senate who used to bother me. It seemed to me at first that every time I opened my mouth in the Senate chamber I butted into the Constitution of the United States. Either I was butting into the shalls or the shall nots, and Thorndyke always let me know it. I could get along from the first well enough in the rough and tumble of debate with men like Senator Crane, for example, a handsome fellow, from the West, too, very showy in every way, but not the man that Thorndyke is. It was the scholarly men that I was a little afraid of, I'm not ashamed to say. I am a long way off from a fool, consequently I know my own limitations, and a want of scholarship is one of those limitations."

Elizabeth listened, more and more beguiled. She could not but see a sort of self-respect in this man; he respected his own intellect because it was worth respecting, and he had very little respect for his own character and honor because he knew they were not worth respecting. As Elizabeth studied him by the mellow lamplight, while his rich voice echoed through the small room, she could not but recognize that here was a considerable man, a considerable force; and she had never known a man of this type before. She noted that he was as well groomed as the

most high-bred man she had ever known—as well as Pelham, for example. He had come into the room with ease and grace. No small tricks of manner disfigured him; he was naturally polished, and he had the gift, very rare and very dangerous, of saying what he would without giving offense, or, rather, of disarming the per-

son who might be offended.

And in spite of his frank talking of himself Elizabeth saw in him an absence of small vanity, of restless selflove. Unconsciously she assumed an air of profound interest in what Clavering was saying—a form of flattery most insidious and effective because of its unconsciousness. Elizabeth herself, in the eighteen months of loneliness, poverty and anxiety which she had lately known, had almost lost the sweet fluency which had once distinguished her; but presently Clavering chose to make her talk, and succeeded admirably. She found herself speaking frankly about her past life and telling things she had never thought of telling a stranger; but Clavering seemed anything but a stranger. In truth, he had probed her so well that he knew much more about her than she had dreamed of revealing. When, at last, General Brandon's step was heard Elizabeth started like a guilty child; she had forgotten that her father was to return. General Brandon was delighted to see Clavering, and took a quarter of an hour to explain why he had been ten minutes late.

"I did'nt expect to see any papers tonight," replied Clavering, "but I would like to talk over some things with you. Please don't go, Mrs. Darrell—what I have to say you are at

perfect liberty to hear."

Elizabeth hesitated, as did General Brandon, but Clavering settled the

matter by saying:

"If I am to drive you out of your sitting-room I shall feel obliged to remain away, and thereby be deprived of General Brandon's valuable services."

Elizabeth remained.

Clavering then began to give the

history from his point of view of the K. F. R. land grants. It was a powerfully interesting story, told with much dramatic force. It embraced the history of much of Clavering's life. which was in itself a long succession of uncommon episodes. It lost nothing in the telling. Then he came to the vindictive and long-continued fight made on him politically, which culminated in the bringing of these matters before a Senate committee by a powerful association of Eastern railway magnates and corporation lawyers, aided by the senators in opposition and others in his own party who, because he was not strictly amenable to party discipline, would be glad to see him driven out of the Senate. But Clavering was a fighting man, and although driven to the wall he had his back to it; he was very far from surrender, and so he said.

Elizabeth listened with breathless interest. Nothing like this had ever come in her experience before. It struck her as being so much larger and stronger than any of the struggles which she had heretofore known that it dwarfed them all. Everybody's affairs seemed small beside Clavering's. Yet she was fully conscious all the time that this was special pleading on Clavering's part. She admired the ingenuity, the finesse, the daring that Clavering had shown and was showing, but it all seemed to her as if there must be something as large and as strong on the other side. But no such idea came into General Brandon's kind, simple,

wooden head.

When Clavering had finished speaking General Brandon rose and, grasping him by the hand, said solemnly:

"My dear sir, I sympathize with you profoundly. I am convinced that you have been the victim of misplaced confidence, and that this unprincipled hounding of you on the part of men who wish to rob you, not only of your property and your seat in the Senate, but of your high character and good name, is bound to come to naught. I offer you my sincere sympathy, and I assure you I place entire credence

in every word that you have told me."

This was more than Elizabeth did; and when Clavering thought of it afterward, sitting over his library fire, he laughed to himself. On the strength of it, however, he had secured opportunities of seeing Elizabeth very often, and he did not mean to let the grass grow under his feet.



THE season opened with a bang on the first of December. The smart set could barely get six hours in bed from going to parties at all hours. This did not apply to Mrs. Luttrell, who, although she was out every night, did not disturb herself to appear in public until four o'clock in the afternoon. That particular form of barbaric entertainment known as a ladies' luncheon had no charms for Mrs. Luttrell, because there were no men to be found at them; for this woman who cherished with an idolatrous recollection the memory of the only man she had ever loved, and who had refused more offers of marriage than any woman of her day, frankly admitted that she couldn't enjoy anything without a masculine element in it. And men she contrived to have in plenty, with a success but little inferior to that of Ninon de L'Enclos. For that reason Richard Baskerville was not only the person Mrs. Luttrell loved best in the world, but was really her most intimate friend. There was nothing Mrs. Luttrell enjoyed so much as a midnight tête-à-tête over her bedroom fire with Baskerville, he just from his books and she just from her nightly gaiety. Mrs. Luttrell scorned a boudoir, or the modern version of it-a den. She had a huge, old-fashioned bedroom, with an ancient four-poster mahogany bed, with green silk curtains and a lace valance; and everything in the room was big and square and handsome and comfortable, like the bed. There was a large fireplace with shining brass fire-dogs, a monumental brass fender, and Mrs. Luttrell frequently admitted that when she got her feet on that fender, and her dressing-gown on, she grew so communicative that she would tell the inmost secrets of her soul to the veriest stranger, if he had his feet on the fender at the same time.

It was on a night early in January that Mrs. Luttrell nabbed Baskerville at her door, as she was being let in by the sleepy black butler. Baskerville followed her upstairs, into her room, considerately turning his back while the old lady got out of her black velvet gown into her comfortable dressing-gown—an operation she performed without the least regard for his presence. Then when her delicate, high-bred feet were on the fender before the glowing wood fire she said:

"Now you can turn around—and I'm a great deal more clothed than the women you take down to dinner

or dance with at balls."

"I don't dance at a great many balls. Let me see—I haven't danced for——"

"Oh, I know. Well, I'm just from a dinner at Secretary Slater's, where that ridiculous little Mrs. Hill-Smith, his daughter, was in great feather, and also the Baldwin girl and Anne Clavering."

"You ought to beg Miss Clavering's pardon for bracketing her with Mrs. Hill-Smith and Eleanor Baldwin."

"My dear boy, it would make you die laughing to see the patronizing air Mrs. Hill-Smith and Eleanor Baldwin put on with Anne Clavering. As the Slater family is at least forty years old and the Brentwood-Baldwins quite twenty years old, they regard the Claverings, who have come up within the last six years, very much as the old French nobility regarded the bourgeoisie. But I think Anne Clavering is a match for them. Indeed, she proved herself a match for a much more considerable antagonist—that is, myself—this very night."

"Have you been impertinent to

Miss Clavering?"

"Well, Richard, my dear boy, I am

afraid I have been. But it was all the fault of those two foolish creatures, Mrs. Hill-Smith and Eleanor Baldwin. It was in this way. The gentlemen" -Mrs. Luttrell still used this antique word-"the gentlemen had come into the drawing-room after dinner-very prim and proper they were after their cigarettes and two glasses of hock. In my time, when the gentlemen came in after dinner they were always as merry as lords and delightfully free. I have been slapped on the back by Daniel Webster at a dinner, when I was sixteen years old. But nothing so agreeable happens now-and there aren't any Daniel Websters, either. Well, when I was talking to that ridiculous Mrs. Hill-Smith something unluckily started me off upon the new people in Washington-Mrs. Smith, you know, assumes that she has sixteen quarterings, so she has to grin and bear it when I begin telling about people, and I always say to her, 'You and I, Mrs. Hill-Smith, who knew some people before 1860.' Somebody was speaking about Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner's private chaplain-that woman has added much to the gaiety of nations. There's a story going around that she had a love of a fight over it, not only with the bishop, but with the bishop's wife, and I was giving a very amusing account of it when Anne Clavering quietly remarked she happened to know that Mrs. Skinner had not spoken of it yet to the bishop. Of course this spoiled my story, and I was a little cross about it. Judge Woodford was present, and he told a pleasant little tale about my grandfather having been very cross on one occasion, and having pulled somebody's nose, and I said my crossness was a case of atavism on my part. And so it was turned into a joke. When we were leaving I was sorry I had been short with Anne Clavering, so I went up and asked her to come and see me on my next day at homeand to pour tea for me-that I still held to the good old fashion of keeping a day at home and seeing my friends. And what do you think she

said? She was very sorry, but she had an attack of atavism, too—her grandfather wasn't used to afternoon tea and she had never acquired any real taste for it!"

Baskerville laughed delightedly.

"Oh, it wasn't so clever, after all," said Mrs. Luttrell, smiling with that unshakable good humor which was the most exasperating thing on earth to all her enemies and her friends alike. "It is just because you're in love with Anne Clavering, and I think she likes you pretty well, too."

Baskerville sat up then, sobered in an instant. What Mrs. Luttrell knew or suspected all Washington would

shortly know.

"Why do you say that?" he asked

quietly.

"Because I think it—that's why. It's one of the strangest things in the world that people in love think all the rest of the world blind and deaf. And a woman lets her secret out just as readily as a man. I say Anne Clavering likes you; I don't say she is pining and can't eat and sleep for you, but I do say she likes you, though. And I feel sorry for the girl—such a family! You ought to see how that divorcée, Mrs. Denman, goes on with Count von Kappf, who, I believe, has been sent over here by a syndicate to marry an American heiress. Nobody knows what Anne Clavering has to suffer for the conduct of that sister of hers."

"And you, who call yourself a Christian, had to add to Miss Clavering's

mortification."

"Oh, it was only a trifle, and she

came out ahead."

"Anyhow, you shall apologize to her. Do you understand me, Sara Luttrell? You shall apologize, and before me, too."

"Very well," replied Mrs. Luttrell, unabashed. "The first time I catch you and Anne Clavering together I'll apologize."

Baskerville sat silent for awhile as Mrs. Luttrell luxuriously toasted her

toes. Presently he said:

"So people are kind enough to say that I am in love with Miss Clavering?" "Yes, indeed. People are always kind enough to say things—and a great many people are saying that you are in love with her. You haven't escaped notice as much as you thought."

"I don't desire to escape notice. And I only hope enough people will say it, so it will get to Miss Clavering's ears. Then she may not be so surprised as to throw me over when—when—the opportunity comes. I may be a good many sorts of a blamed fool, Sara, but I am not such a fool as to be anything but flattered when my name is associated with Miss Clavering's."

"Very decently said. But how are you going to manage about this senatorial investigation—trying to ruin the father as a preliminary to marrying the

daughter?"

Baskerville grew grave at once. The investigation was on in earnest. The committee which had been appointed before the adjournment of Congress had begun its sittings directly upon the meeting of Congress, and Baskerville had at once come into prominence as one of the representatives of the Civil Service League. The question of Clavering's culpability with regard to the land grants was complicated with the open barter and sale of Federal offices, and the Civil Service League had taken it up actively. The League was in no way bound by senatorial courtesy, and it had a formidable array of evidence to produce; which pointed straight to criminal as well as civil indictments. Baskerville found himself in a difficult position. He had gone too far in one direction toward exposing Senator Clavering, and his heart had carried him too far in another direction, for he was at last beginning to realize that he had fallen in love with Anne Clavering—a path upon which a strong man never halts. It is your weakling who falls halfway in love and then stops.

Mrs. Luttrell studied Baskerville keenly. Herself a sentimentalist in disguise, she loved Baskerville the better for doing what she had long dreaded—for she had a woman's jealousy of another woman's usurping the first place with this nephew-in-law, who was

son, companion and comrade in one. But at least he did not contemplate foisting a pink and white nonentity upon her; Mrs. Luttrell always declared herself afraid of silly women. She not only liked Anne Clavering, but she saw in her a large and generous spirit, who would not, by small artifices, try to come between Baskerville and Mrs. Luttrell. And the ineradicable interest which is every woman's inalienable right in a love affair was strong in Mrs. Luttrell's breast. She began to wish that Baskerville and Anne would marry, and after sitting quite silent for ten minutes, watching Baskerville's moody face, she suddenly got up, went over to him, and, smoothing the hair back from his forehead, kissed it tenderly. Two tears dropped upon his brow. Baskerville looked up and took her hands in his. He spoke no word, but he knew that the memory of the man so long dead was poignant still, and Mrs. Luttrell after a pause said, in a low voice:

"I hope Anne Clavering will love you as I loved my Richard. And if you can make her as happy as he made me— Good night—I can't bear to speak much of it, even to you."

Baskerville went across the garden to his own house, and into his library. The first thing he saw upon the big library-table was a mass of documents relating to the K. F. R. land grants. Baskerville pushed them away, and taking up a well-thumbed volume of Theocritus tried to forget himself in the pictures of the fair shining of the Sicilian sun, in the sound of the pipe of Daphnis, in the complainings of the two poor old fishermen lying by night in their wattled cabin on the sand dunes.

All was in vain. His thoughts were no sooner diverted from Anne Clavering than they turned to Clavering and his affairs. How amazing was this man who had rough-hewed his way to a high place, to enormous wealth, to great power, from which he was likely to be thrown headlong into an abyss of shame! Baskerville had very little doubt that, no matter how successful might be the suits against Clavering,

he would manage to retain great sums of money; men of the Clavering type hold on to their money more intelligently than to their supposititious honor. And finding it impossible to get away from his own thoughts, even in books which had heretofore been an unfailing sedative, Baskerville went to bed, and tossed in true lover's fashion half the remaining night before he fell into a troubled sleep, to dream of Anne Clavering.

It is said that all truly benevolent women are matchmakers, and although Mrs. Thorndyke would have indignantly denied the charge of being a matchmaker, it was an indisputable fact that within a fortnight of dining at Mrs. Luttrell's she contrived an impromptu dinner at which Anne Clavering and Baskerville were the first guests to be asked; and if they had declined it is doubtful if the dinner would have come off at all. However, they both accepted, and Mrs. Thorndyke, whether by inadvertence, as she alleged, or by design, as Thorndyke charged, had Baskerville take Anne in to dinner.

Some faint reflection of the rumor which was flying about Washington concerning Baskerville's devotion had reached Anne Clavering's ears. It gave a delightful shyness to her eyes, a warm color to her usually pale cheeks. Something in Baskerville's mannerthe ingenuity with which he managed to perform every little service for her himself, conveyed subtly but plainly to Anne his interest in her. She had been deeply flattered and even made happy by Baskerville's calling at last at her house. There was every reason why he should remain away-so much Anne had admitted to herself, often, and always with a burning blush, remembering what she knew and had read about the investigation through which her father was passing. But Baskerville had come, and there must have been a powerful force, much stronger than her mother's timid invitation, to bring him. Perhaps he came because he could not stay away.

At this thought Anne, who was

sitting at her dressing-table after the dinner at the Thorndykes', caught sight of her own face in the mirror. A happy smile hovered about the corners of her mouth, her eves became eloquent. Women, being close students of their own emotions, can always detect the dawning and the development of this silent but intense interest in a certain man, an interest which is born. grows and often dies for want of nourishment-but sometimes lives and thrives on neglect-and sometimesoh, glorious consummation - comes into its kingdom of love. Anne Clavering, who had passed her twenty-seventh birthday, and who, shamed and indignant at the conduct of her sisters. had maintained a haughty reserve toward men and had hitherto found it easy, knew that it was not without meaning she felt herself watching for Baskerville's entrance into a room: that she was secretly uneasy until he had placed himself beside her; that when he talked, an instant, sweet and positive mental sympathy came into being between them which seemed to bring them together without any volition on their part.

January was flying by. Anne Clavering went out quite as much as Mrs. Luttrell, but with a different motive. To Mrs. Luttrell society was a necessity, as a thing becomes after a lifetime of habitude. Anne Clavering would have liked society well enough if it had been merely a means of pleasure. But she had to maintain before the world a position which her father and her two sisters jeopardized every hour. Their place in society was by no means a fixed one. All the idle and careless people, all the worshipers of money, all those who love to eat and drink at somebody else's expense, all those who pursue pleasure without conscience or delicacy, thronged the

Clavering house.

Clavering himself was seldom invited out, and did not regret it. The small talk of society bored him, and he was conscious that he did not shine unless he had the centre of the stage. Occasionally he met a man who interested

him, and semi-occasionally a woman who did the same. But no woman had ever interested him as much as Elizabeth Darrell. He was amazed himself at the power she had of drawing him to her; for, under the specious pretense of getting information from General Brandon concerning the K. F. R. land grants, Clavering soon managed to spend two or three evenings a week in Elizabeth's company. He speedily found out General Brandon's wayshis hour or two at the club in the evening, his visits to his old friends, all of which were clock-like in their regularity. On these evenings, when General Brandon returned to meet an appointment, Clavering would invariably be found established in the study. Any other man in the world but General Brandon would have had his suspicions aroused. but the general was born to be hoodwinked. His chivalric honor, his limpidness of character, his entire innocence were strong forces, as all these things are. He radiated good influences upon honest men, and gave active encouragement to every rogue of every sort who had dealings with him.

Elizabeth Darrell, however, was not so simple as her father. After that first evening she saw that Clavering was determined to secure her society. She wondered at herself for submitting to it, but in truth it would have been more remarkable if she had not done so. The extreme dulness of her life made almost any companionship a resource, and Clavering had certain fascinating qualities which were very obvious. Without making himself the hero of his own recitals, he gave the most vivid and interesting pictures of life on the wide Wyoming ranges, on the Staked Plains, in California mining camps, amid the boulders of the Yellowstone. Elizabeth listened under a kind of bewitchment, while Clavering, in his rich voice, told the story of those years—a story pulsing with movement, brilliant with adventure, with life and death at issue every moment. She began to understand this man's power over men and to recognize a kind of compulsion he exercised over her. She might have remained out of the study, where with a map spread out, to amuse General Brandon, Clavering talked to him and at Elizabeth. She was present not only because she wished to be, but she recognized distinctly that she also came because Clavering wished her to come. Especially was this true with regard to those odd half-hours which she spent with Clavering alone. Once she went out of the room when Serena brought Clavering's card up. In a minute or two Serena came with a message:

"De gent'mun seh he mus' see you, Miss 'Liz'beth,' bout some dem papers outen de gin'l's trunk."

And Elizabeth, obeying this strange compulsion, went back into the room, and saw Clavering's eyes light up at the sight of her.

That he was deeply and even desperately in love with her from the start there could be no question to any woman, and least of all to a woman so clever as Elizabeth Darrell. She received a profound shock when this was quickly revealed to her, not by any explicit word of Clavering's, but by all his words, his looks, his course of conduct. He knew too much to venture to make open love to Elizabeth, and in other ways she made him keep his distance in a manner which Clavering had never experienced in his life before. He would no more have dared the smallest personal liberty with Elizabeth Darrell than he would have ventured to put a stick of dynamite into the fire. He had never really been afraid of any woman before. He realized fully the difficulties which beset him when he thought of his chances of making Elizabeth his wife. He could manage a divorce from his present wife in a way not known by the poor soul herself, or by Anne, or by anyone else in the world except Clavering. That once accomplished, though, Elizabeth re-mained still to be won. She probably inherited the Southern prejudice against divorce, and it might not be easy to overcome it. And there was General Brandon to be considered. Clavering, studying that honest, simple, handsome face across the table from him, bent earnestly over the ridiculous maps and useless memoranda, remembered that the general still cherished an ancient pair of dueling pistols, which he had inherited from his grandfather. He had taken these antique shooting-irons out of the old escritoire in the corner and had shown them, not without pride and reverence, to Clav-

ering, saying solemnly:

"These weapons, my dear sir, have never been used since my grandfather purchased them in 1804, when he unfortunately became involved in a dispute concerning politics with a gentleman of the highest character in Virginia. They had a hostile meeting and shots were exchanged, but no blood was spilled. I am sincerely glad that the old practice of dueling over trifles is gone never to return. But there is one class of cases left in which a gentleman has but one resource—the duello. That is, when the honor of the ladies of his family is impugned. In most instances the transgressor should be shot down like a dog. But there are other cases when, owing to imprudence on the lady's part, the code must be invoked. Thank God, the honor of Southern women is safe in their own keeping. But behind her, every woman, sir, of every country, should have the protection of a man with arms in his hands, if need be. I am aware that my ideas are antiquated; but I have always held them and I always shall."

Clavering listened to this without a smile. Nothing would be more likely, if he should betray his design toward Elizabeth, than that this soft-voiced, gullible, guileless old Don Quixote would level a loaded pistol at him and eventually land him at the undertaker's. These, however, were but obstacles; and obstacles, in Clavering's lexicon, were things to be over-

come.

In the narrowness and dulness of her life, Elizabeth naturally thought much of Clavering. If she had been asked at any moment whether she would marry him, should he get a divorce, she would have instantly answered no. But she had seen enough of the great, self-indulgent world to know that divorce and remarriage are by no means the impossible and unheard of things which simple people in staid communities think they are.

She began to speculate idly, in her lonely afternoon walks and in the evenings when Clavering did not come. as to what would happen if she should marry Clavering. Whenever she caught herself at this she would recoil from the idea in horror. But it returned. Pelham's conduct had shattered all her ideals of man's love. If he could act as he had done, where was the difference between the love of the best and the worst of men? And this bitterness toward Pelham was much increased by the receipt of a letter from Mr. Macbean, the solicitor, more hard, more peremptory, more insulting than any he had yet There had been no written her. trouble in finding Elizabeth's whereabouts, for although she had not thought fit to notify Macbean of her leaving England, it was known that she had returned to America, and Macbean's letter reached her promptly. In it threats of legal proceedings were repeated, with an earnestness terrible to Elizabeth. This letter made her ill in bed. She called it a neuralgic headache, to soothe her father, but in truth it was a collapse from alarm and grief.

It was now the height of the season, and the whirl of gaiety and of politics made Washington seethe like a caldron. Carriages were dashing about from the early afternoon to all hours of the morning. Houses were lighted up, music resounded, men and women rushed hither and thither in the race

after pleasure.

At the great white building on Capitol Hill history was being steadily and rapidly made. One subject, not wholly political, aroused deep interest on the House side as well as the Senate. The investigating committee on the K. F. R. land grants had already held several meetings, and it was known that for sound reasons of

political expedience the party in power wished the question settled at the earliest date. There was among certain senators who really did not fully understand the matter a disposition to throw Clavering overboard, like Jonah. Those senators who really understood the question reckoned Clavering to be perfectly deserving of a long term in State's prison. There was no hope of acquittal for him from the moment the whole evidence against him was known to be available; and for this nobody deserved so much credit as Richard Baskerville. He had been more than two years unraveling the tangled web of litigation, and only a very astute lawyer, with money and time to spend on it, could have done it at all. It was quite clear now, compact and available. A lesser man than Clavering would at this stage of the proceedings have resigned from the Senate and decamped.

Clavering, however, was incapable of understanding defeat, and had no more thought of surrender than the Old Guard at Waterloo. His entertainments, always lavish and frequent, grew more lavish and more frequent. Washington was not big enough to supply half the luxuries he required; New York was called upon, and Paris and Vienna, for rarities of all sorts to make the dinners and balls at the Claverings' more brilliant, more startling. Elise and Lydia reveled in this; Anne's good taste and good sense revolted against it. She read every word in the newspapers concerning her father, and she began to see that ruin and disgrace were threatening him with fearful quickness. Even Reginald Clavering, dull and self-centered, became frightened and ashamed. Not so Clavering; he was not the man to "roll darkling down the torrent of his fate." He would go if he had to go, with all the splendor which unlimited money and assurance could contrive. It gave him little spells of laughter and amusement when he thought how much Washington would miss his princely

entertaining, in case he should be struck down by his enemies. If that should occur, however, he reflected that Washington was not the only city nor America even the only country in the world. He was not really much grieved at the possibility of leaving public life, although he fought with a gladiator's courage against being thrown out. He had accomplished much of what he had gone into public life for-the making of a vaster fortune than the vast one he had before. And then, that new dream which had come into his life-Elizabeth Darrell. If he should win her—as he fully intended and expected-she might not find Washington a very comfortable place of residence. He would give her a splendid hôtel in Paris, or a grand establishment in London. He would spend half the year in America, in the West, which he liked far better than the East; and the other half he could spend having what he would have called "a great big bat" in Europe. He might go into European financiering and teach those old fogies a thing or two-Clavering indulged in many Alnaschar dreams about this time.

One afternoon in the latter part of January Elizabeth went out for her usual solitary walk. It had been very cold with snow, and the thermometer that day had suddenly jumped into the sixties, bringing a damp white fog which enveloped everything.

Elizabeth walked straight down the street on which she lived, without regard to where she was going; she meant to be out of doors only for so many hours, and to find in the loneliness of a walk a change from the loneliness of the house. It was within a week of the time she had received Macbean's letter, and it lay heavy on her heart.

She had walked but a few squares when she heard a step behind her which she recognized as Clavering's. She stopped involuntarily, the red blood surging into her pale face. In a moment Clavering was by her side.

"I saw you go out, and followed you," he said.

Elizabeth made no reply. He had never joined her on the street before, although sometimes she had passed him getting in and out of his automobile or driving behind a notable pair of sorrels. But this time he had not only joined her—he had followed her. Elizabeth's sudden flushing was by no means lost on Clavering.

They walked on due east through the mist which enveloped all things, the snow still piled in drifts along the edges of the streets. They spoke little, but Elizabeth felt instinctively that Clavering had something of consequence to say to her when they got into the unfamiliar part of the town, where he could be certain of being

unobserved.

The street, which had been fashionable as far as Sixteenth street, grew semi-fashionable, and then became a region of lodging-houses, places with dressmakers' signs, and an occasional small shop. Then, growing more and more remote, it became a street of comfortable, quiet houses, tenanted by people to whom the West End of Washington mattered as little as the West End of London. By that time they had gone a mile. They came to one of those small triangular parks which abound in Washington, where there are seats under the trees and asphalt walks winding in and out of shrubbery.

Elizabeth, under the spell of compulsion which Clavering had cast upon her, made no objection to entering the park with him. Usually it was completely open to observation, but now the soft and clinging fog drew a misty curtain between the little park and the world. Clavering led the way to a bench among a clump of evergreens, and Elizabeth, without a protest, sat down upon the bench, the senator at

her side.

"There are places within half a mile of everywhere in this town," he said, "where one can be as secure from observation of the people one knows as if it were Bagdad. And, if I had designed this afternoon for meeting you and talking confidentially with you,

nothing could have been better. The people who live in these houses seem always to be asleep or dead, and if they knew our names they couldn't recognize us ten feet off. Now," he continued, "tell me what is troubling you—for I have seen ever since that first glimpse of you that something is preying upon you."

Elizabeth remained silent.

"What is it?" asked Clavering again, with authority in his voice. And Elizabeth, still with that strange feeling of being obliged to do what Clavering required, told him the whole

story of the necklace.

Clavering listened attentively. Elizabeth had tried to keep out of it the personal note—the shame and disappointment and resentment she felt at Pelham's conduct; but she was dealing with a very astute man, who read her with extraordinary keenness, and who saw the good policy, from his own point of view, of still further embittering her feelings toward Pelham.

"I should say that fellow Pelham ought to have shown you a little more consideration, especially as you say he

inherited everything."

"Yes."

"A woman, standing alone, is almost bound to fall in with just such brutes as Pelham and that Scotch solicitor."

Elizabeth winced at hearing Pelham called a brute—it was almost incredible that such a word should be applied to Hugh Pelham. She made no defense of him, however, and Clavering

kept on.

"If the diamond broker—pawnbroker, I should call him—gave you five hundred pounds on the necklace it was probably worth fifteen hundred. However, fifteen hundred pounds is a small matter."

"It is a great deal to me, and always was, except for that short time in London when we had a good income and thought ourselves the richest people in the world," replied Elizabeth.

Clavering paused a full minute and fixed his eyes on her before he said:

"You may, if you choose, be one of the richest women in America."

Elizabeth's face had grown deathly pale. She was sensible of the dishonor of any proposal Clavering might make to her. All of the stories she had heard from the beginning about Clavering's intention to divorce his wife rushed upon her mind; all of her own vague and haunting speculations for the past few weeks. She remained silent, but every moment she grew more agitated. Clavering, too, said nothing, allowing the leaven to work.

"Of course, there is but one way to do this. I can get a divorce and then you must marry me. No doubt you have a lot of unpractical ideas about divorce, but let me tell you, when a man and a woman are indispensable to each other—as you are to me—what does anything on earth matter?"

No one listening to Clavering's cool and measured tones would have surmised what he was proposing to Elizabeth, nor did he attempt the smallest endearment, free as they were from observation, for the fog grew denser every moment and the little park was wholly deserted except for themselves.

At this Elizabeth attempted some faint protest, which went unheeded by Clavering, who spoke again.

"People call me a successful man. So I am, with money, politics, cards and horses. But I have had no luck with women. First, I married before I was twenty-one-cursed folly that it was! You have seen my wife -I'll say no more. Then, my two elder daughters-well, they are like me in some ways-that's enough. Elise has been through the divorce court. It cost me something like fifty thousand dollars to keep the truth about her from coming out. Lydia will go the same way. My best plan with them is to marry them to men who will get the upper hand of them-keep a tight rein over them. So far, I haven't succeeded—and I am seriously considering giving them each a handsome fortune, marrying them to foreigners and getting them out of the country."

Elizabeth's pale face had grown red while Clavering was speaking. He was close enough to see it, even by the uncertain light that penetrated the mist.

"You think I'm a brute, eh? No; on the contrary, I have a strong hankering after decency in my womenkind."

"Your daughter Anne—" Elizabeth spoke falteringly.

"Ah, yes! Bad luck again. Anne has twice the sense of her sisters, is really more attractive and is perfectly certain to behave herself. But she is on her mother's side, and if—or when—I do get a divorce I shall have to fight her—and she is the only one of my children whose opposition would amount to anything. You know what a Miss Nancy Reginald is."

"But—but—how can you get a divorce if Mrs. Clavering—?"

"Doesn't want it? Well, I never was properly married to her in the first place. The old lady didn't know it at the time, and I was a youngster and didn't know it, either-but our marriage wasn't regular, at all. I should have got the license in Kentucky instead of in Ohio, where we crossed the river to get married. So we are not really married and never have been, according to law. When I mention the subject to Mrs. Clavering I shall offer to get the divorce; if she is contumacious I shall simply prove that we have never been married at all. That will be hard on the children, and on that account I think there is no doubt she would agree to the divorce, if it were not for Anne. Anne, however, doesn't know anything yet about the defect in the marriage, and I rather think she will back down when she finds out just where we stand."

Elizabeth listened to this with horror. But it was horror of the deed, not of the man. Clavering's calm and lucid presentation of the case, the absence of hypocrisy, his quiet determination, seemed to lift him out of the class of vulgar criminals and make him

almost respectable.

And then he went on to give his side of the case, and his voice had in it a

strange note of longing.

"I have before me twenty years yet, and although I am reckoned a man who can live on bonds and stocks and lawsuits and fighting other men, still I've had my dreams—I have them still. If I could find a woman who could be a wife to me, and yet could be an intellectual companion for me—that would be something that all my money hasn't brought me. Do you blame a man for longing after it? Don't you think I am more nearly human for wanting it than if I were satisfied to go on all my life as I have done for the last thirty-five years?"

"Yes."

Elizabeth spoke unwillingly, but the assent was forced out of her. And whether it was her words, his voice, always singularly captivating, his compelling glance or his powerful personality, Elizabeth began to feel a toleration, along with a reprehension of him; for Clavering, like all men, was made up of things to admire and things to abhor; only he possessed both in a stronger degree than common. He was much older than Elizabeth, but he had not lost the fire and vigor of youth.

Elizabeth's agitation had subsided somewhat, but she was still unable or unwilling to speak. The gray mist was becoming denser, and they could see the gas lamps studding the fast falling darkness like jewels; the sound of wheels and hoofs upon the asphalt was deadened by the fog and grew fainter; the street was quieter, more deserted even than Washington streets usually are. In the little park, with the masses of evergreen shrubbery around them, they were as alone, as little subject to intrusion as if they had been on a desert island. After a considerable pause Clavering spoke again.

siderable pause Clavering spoke again.

"And a month ago I met you.
Don't think people are fools who talk
of love at first sight for anybody at
any age, or under any circumstances.
The moment my eyes fell upon you I
was anxious to know you. When I

knew you I wanted to know you better. When I knew you I became willing to do anything, to jeopardize anything, in order to marry you. And I will give you a great fortune, millions of money, of which I shall get very little benefit, because you will outlive me many years and probably marry some other man and endow him, by gad, with my money. I will go anywhere you may desire to live, for I don't believe you would consent to live in Washington. You may have a splendid house in London or Paris, a great country house, a chateau, any and everywhere you like, and you may command me as no other woman has ever commanded me. Now, will you marry me after I am divorced?"

Elizabeth felt stunned. She had known from the first what was coming, but when Clavering put his wish into words it was as strange, as staggering as if the idea had never before occurred to her. The thought of committing so great a wrong upon another woman, as Clavering suggested, appalled her—a wrong so vast and far-reaching that she turned away from the contemplation of it. But she did not fly from the temptation—and the temptation which is not fled from is the conqueror.

Clavering interpreted her silence with ease. He took her hand, pulled off her glove and held her soft palm be-tween his two strong ones. Five minutes passed; they seemed an hour to Elizabeth, dazed, frightened yet fascinated, her mind overwhelmed with what Clavering had told her, had promised her, had urged upon her. Through it all came the cry of her heart for Pelham. Had he been true to her this temptation would never have come in her way. And as he had forgotten her and had even persecuted her, what did it matter what became of her, so she had ease instead of this frightful poverty, companionship instead of this dreadful loneliness, security instead of this perpetual terror over the small and sordid matter of a few hundred pounds? Clavering was too clever a man to urge her overmuch when he saw that he had a tempter always with her in her own self. At last, after five minutes of agitated silence, she managed to withdraw her hand and rise. Clavering, without a word, walked with her out of the little park, hailed a passing hansom in the dusk and put her in, only saying at the last:

"I will see you again as soon as possible. Meanwhile, remember you have but to say one word and all is

yours.'

The hansom rolled off, and Clavering, putting his hands in his pockets, walked away at a quick gait. The expression on his face was like that of a successful gladiator. It was not pleasant to see.

VI

The next night but one Clavering had an appointment with General Brandon at the usual hour of half-past nine. And at nine o'clock promptly he was sitting with Elizabeth in the little study, waiting for General Brandon's return.

The first thing he said to her was:

"Of course that affair about the necklace must be straightened out at once. I can cable to my London agent, and he can find out all about it and recover it, for it can be easily traced and recovered. And leave me to deal with the solicitor on the quiet."

"I hardly think you know what you are offering," replied Elizabeth, with involuntary haughtiness. "I could not accept money or services from you. It is not to be thought of for a moment."

"Then what are you going to do about it?" asked Clavering coolly, in the words of a celebrated character.

Ah, what was she going to do about it? thought poor Elizabeth. Tell her father and see him turned out of the only shelter he had for his aged head? If only she had been more experienced, had known more! She had been so very, very ignorant in those London days. If Pelham had not behaved so basely to her!

Clavering talked on, quietly assuming that he would take charge of the matter for her, but Elizabeth, after listening to him in silence and even in weakness, suddenly and impulsively rose and said:

"I desire you never to speak to me

on that subject again."

Then General Brandon's step was heard upon the stair, and nothing more was said between them. Elizabeth remained in the room while Clavering was there, and he honestly thought he was progressing quite as fast as he had

any right to expect.

It was now the middle of January, and the investigating committee continued to sit and the newspapers to print the proceedings. This did not tend to make it any pleasanter for Clavering's family. Anne, with a touch of her father's courage, continued to go out and to entertain, but it was with an aching heart. To add to her other anxieties, Mrs. Clavering was very ailing and unhappy. By some strange accident-for the poor lady never read the newspapers-she got an inkling that Clavering was under fire, and she often asked questions which Anne had difficulty in answering. Whatever love Mrs. Clavering had ever felt for Clavering had long ago been cast out by fear; but she had the true feminine instinct which makes a dove fierce in the presence of the despoiler of her nest.

Reginald Clavering redoubled his attention to his mother, and was of more help to Anne than she had thought possible. It had been determined, chiefly at Clavering's suggestion, that a grand musical, followed by a ball, should be given at the Clavering house on Shrove Tuesday as a wind-up to the splendid entertainments for which the house had long been noted, and the undisguised intention was to eclipse everything that had hither-to been done in Washington in the way of entertaining. Anne opposed it, but Elise and Lydia carried the day, backed up by their father.

Only Clavering suspected it was likely to be the last entertainment given there. He felt confident of knowing the decision of the committee before Shrove Tuesday, and he fully

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realized the possibility that it might mean expulsion from the Senate on his record alone; as, unluckily for him, there was a very complete and authentic legal record of his doings, which Baskerville had unearthed. far Clavering had kept out of jail, but there had been more than one true bill found against him, and even verdicts in criminal cases, which had never been enforced. He was still fighting, and meant to go down fighting, but he devoted far more thought to planning what he would do if he were compelled to leave public life than if he were permitted to stay in it. He reckoned that by expediting matters he could get the divorce granted and the decree entered by the first of June, when he would marry Elizabeth Darrell, go abroad for the summer, and then arrange his life for the future. And while he was taking it for granted that he could marry Elizabeth, and was seeing her in private two or three times a week by General Brandon's innocent connivance, Clavering had never so much as touched her hand or pressed his lips to her cheek, nor had she ever allowed him one word of acknowledged love-making. And this was a woman he was ready to dower with millions, which, as he grimly thought, a young husband, his successor, would get! Clavering concluded that some women were ungrateful. At the same time, he did not seriously doubt that he could marry Elizabeth in June.

He began to congratulate himself on his good luck in his constant presence at General Brandon's house escaping notice. No one but himself, the general and Elizabeth seemed to have any knowledge of his visits, although General Brandon, at his club, did some innocent bragging about the assistance he was giving to Senator Clavering "in the unholy warfare against a man incapable of the smallest dishonesty. Why, sir," he would say to anyone who would listen to him, "Senator Clavering has assured me, on his word of honor, that there is not one bit of truth in the shameful allegations brought against him in the public prints. Wait, however, until the senatorial committee has made its report. Then you will see Senator Clavering triumphantly vindicated; mark my words, sirtriumphantly vindicated."

Nobody but General Brandon, however, really believed this. Certainly Anne Clavering did not, and every day that she read the newspaper accounts of what had occurred and what had not occurred at the meeting of the investigating committee her heart sank lower. To keep her mother from suspecting anything Anne went through her usual course of life, but it required all her resolution to do it. Every time she entered a drawing-room she called up all her courage to meet an affront, if one should be offered her. Not one was passed upon her, but she lived in dread of it.

During this time Baskerville had gone everywhere he thought it likely that he should meet Anne Clavering, but so far he had not been fortunate. He did not repeat his visit to Clavering's house. He had doubted the propriety of his going in the first instance, and he doubted it still more as time passed on. But it did not keep him from falling deeper and deeper in love with the image of Anne Clavering in.

his mind.

On the Thursday which was Constance Thorndyke's day at home he felt tolerably confident that Anne Clavering would be paying her dinner call; and so on the stroke of four he presented himself, armed and equipped as the law directs, at Mrs. Luttrell's door to accompany that redoubtable person upon a round of Thursday

Constance Thorndyke received them with the charming grace and cordiality which always distinguished her, and Senator Thorndyke was equally pleased to see them. He came up and established Mrs. Luttrell in a chair by the fire, with a good cup of tea and with a man on each side of her; and Mrs. Luttrell found herself as happy as it is given to mortals to be on this distressful planet. Thorndyke's conversation interested her on the one side, and Admiral Prendergast on her other side resumed an intermittent flirtation with her which had gone on for not less than forty

years.

Mrs. Thorndyke had never been strictly beautiful nor even remarkably pretty before her marriage, but since then she had developed a late flowering loveliness which was much more than beauty. She was happy, she loved and was beloved; she had it in her power to assist the man she loved without making him hate her; she had, in fact, all that she had ever asked of high heaven, except one thing-she was childless. But that one supreme disappointment gave to her face and to her soul a touch of softness, of resignation, that disarmed fate. With a tender feminine superstition, she believed that. this last gift having been denied her, she would be suffered to retain the happiness already hers. Thorndyke himself had to be both husband and children to her, and on him she concentrated all the love and solicitude of her nature. That he was happy there could be no doubt. In Constance he had all that he had ever wished for.

The Thorndyke house was one of the few in Washington in which Baskerville could enter with a clear conscience in the matter of duty calls. He always paid them promptly to Constance Thorndyke, and often went when there was no obligation for him to go. He had someone besides Constance Thorndyke in view, however, in paying that particular visit; it was Anne Clavering whom he really came to see. Mrs. Thorndyke found means to let him know that Anne had not been there yet; and while Baskerville was taking what comfort he could out of this Anne walked into the drawing-room.

She looked pale and worn—Baskerville's keen eyes took this in at a glance; but like a sincere lover he admired her none the less for not being in a flush of spirits, and felt an increased tenderness for her. Her face grew delicately rosy when she saw who was present, and rosier still when Baskerville established her in a corner, that he might have a monopoly of her sweet company. Bearing in mind his promise to discipline his aunt, almost the first words Baskerville said to Anne were:

"I hear my aunt was quite impertinent to you the other night, but before I slept I made her promise to apologize

to you."

This was quite loud enough for Mrs. Luttrell to hear, and she promptly turned her smiling, sharp old face

toward Anne.

"My dear, he did, as I am a sinner! Well, it's a great thing at my time of life to discover a new sensation, and I've found one in the act of apology. Now listen, all of you-Constance, make these people stop chattering-Jack Prendergast, be quiet, and Senator Thorndyke, stop laughing. Miss Clavering, I was rather impertinent to you at Secretary Slater's the other night, but I declare, it was those two foolish women, Mrs. Hill-Smith and Eleanor Baldwin, who were really to blame. However, I think you got the better of me-ha! ha! I always liked you, and like you better for your spirit. I offer you my sincere apologies—on condition that you never again make the least objection to anything I say or do-for, look you, Sara Luttrell has been used to speaking her mind too long to change. But I apologize."

At which Admiral Prendergast re-

marked piously:

"'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace."

Anne rose and took Mrs. Luttrell's

hand in hers.

"I'll forgive you," she said, smiling; but don't think I am afraid of you I like you too much for that."

"I know you're not afraid of meyou and my nephew, Richard Baskerville, are the only two creatures yet who openly defy me—and when you join forces, as you have done today, you

are too strong for me."

This coupling of their names did not lose anything by Mrs. Luttrell's emphatic manner of saying it, and it deepened the color in Anne's face and brought the light to Baskerville's eyes. And, as if directly inspired by Satan, the old lady kept on:

"You ought to have seen how angry my nephew was with me when he heard of my behavior—we were having a quiet chat in my bedroom while I was undressing, and he gave me such a rating that it scandalized my maid. Oh, he took it to heart much more than

you did!"

How much inadvertence and how much malice aforethought there were in this speech only Sara Luttrell knew, but it was distinctly disconcerting to Anne Clavering, and visibly shortened her visit. Mrs. Luttrell went out at the same time, and, after being helped into her big coach by Baskerville, turned to speak to him as the carriage rolled off.

"Didn't I do it handsomely? Why,

he isn't here!"

And at that moment she caught sight of Baskerville sitting by Anne Clavering's side in her brougham, then whirling around the corner. Baskerville had got into his present agreeable situation by simply not waiting for an invitation, and furthermore, by saying to the footman authoritatively:

"Miss Clavering wishes to drive out Connecticut avenue until she directs

you to turn."

It was all done so suddenly that Anne did not realize it until it was over; but what woman who loves is averse to having the man of her choice sitting by her side in the intimate seclusion of a brougham at dusk of a winter's evening? Baskerville, however, was there for a purpose—a purpose quickly formed but to be resolutely carried out. He said to Anne:

"I saw that my aunt's heedless words embarrassed you, and I felt sorry for you. But it was quite true—I made her promise to apologize to you; and as long as I live, as far as I have the power, I shall force everybody who injures you to make you amends."

Baskerville's eyes, fastened upon Anne, gave a deeper meaning to his words. The flush faded from Anne's cheeks, and she looked at Baskerville with troubled eyes, knowing a crisis was at hand.

"I am very bold in forcing myself on

you," he said, "but the time has come for me to speak. I have not the same chance as other men, because I can't go to your father's house. I went once, upon your mother's kind invitation. but I doubted whether I should have done so; I can only plead my desire to see you, and I feel I can't go again. You know, perhaps, that I am one of the lawyers engaged in prosecuting this investigation before the Senate. If I had known you before I began it I would never have gone into it. But. being in it, I can't honorably withdraw. Perhaps you can't forgive me for what I have done, but it has not kept me from loving you with all my soul."

Anne shrank back in the carriage. At any other time she would have heard these words with palpitating joy; and even now it opened to her a momentary glimpse of paradise. But the memory of all that was said and done about her father, the conviction of his impending disgrace, overwhelmed her. She sat silent and ashamed, longing to accept the sweetness of the love offered her, conscious of her own irtegrity, but with a primitive, honest pride, reluctant to give any man the dower of disgrace which she felt went with her father's daughter.

Silence on the part of the beloved usually augurs well to the lover, but when Anne's silence was accentuated by two large tears that dropped upon her cheeks Baskerville realized that they were not happy tears. He would have soothed her with a lover's tenderness, but Anne repulsed him with a

strange pride.

"You are not to blame for what you have done in my father's case; but I know, as well as you do, that before this month is out my father may be a disgraced man. And although you may not believe it—you, with your generations of ladies and gentlemen behind you"—she spoke with a certain bitterness—"may not believe that the daughter of people like my father and my mother can have any pride, yet I have—whether I am entitled to it or not. I would not take a disgraced name to any man."

Baskerville's answer to this was to take her two hands in his. It became difficult for her to be haughty to a man who plainly indicated that he meant to kiss her within five minutes. And he did

Anne's protests were not those of a woman meaning to yield; Baskerville saw that she felt a real shame, the genuine reluctance of a high and honorable spirit. But it was swept away in the torrent of a sincere and manly love. When they parted at Anne's door Baskerville had wrung from her the confession of her love, and they were, to each other, acknowledged lovers.

That night Anne and her father dined alone. Elise and Lydia were dining out with some of their larky friends, and Reginald was out of town. Clavering noted that Anne was rather silent. Anne, for her part, looked at her father with a kind of resentment she had often felt before. What right had he to dower his children with his own evil deeds? Why, instead of acquiring a vast fortune, which he spent on them as on himself with lavishness, should he not have given them a decent inheritance? Was it not wholly through him that she had not been able to give herself freely and joyfully to the man who loved her and whom she loved? With these thoughts on her mind she sat through the dinner, silent and distrait, but she could not wholly subdue the happiness that Baskerville had given her, even though happiness with her could never be without alloy.

When dinner was over she went up to her mother's room, and spent the rest of the evening cheering and comforting the poor soul. When Mrs. Clavering was in bed Anne came downstairs to remain until Élise and Lydia returned from their party. She sat in the library with a book in her hand, but her thoughts were on Baskerville. And, thinking of him, she fell into a sweet sleep to dream of him. When she awakened it was almost midnight, and Élise and Lydia had not returned.

To keep herself from falling asleep again she took up at random one of a pile of periodicals on the table. It was a scurrilous newspaper which she loathed; but the first paragraph in it which, before she could lay it down, fell under her eye enchained her attention. An hour afterward Élise and Lydia came in and tiptoed softly up to their rooms; but Anne remained in the same position in the great library chair in which she had been for the last hour, still holding the newspaper in her hand.

Clavering had gone out, and after a visit to the club, which he found rather chilling, went to General Brandon's house, as usual in advance of his appointment. It seemed to Clavering on that evening as if Elizabeth relaxed a little of her reserve, which was at the same time both timid and Later he went downtown haughty. and managed to put up a tolerably stiff game of poker, and it was two o'clock in the morning before he found himself at his own door. He let himself in, and went into the vast, luxurious library, where the fire still glowed. He turned up the electric light in a superb bronze electrolier on his librarytable, stirred the fire and then perceived Anne sitting in a chair drawn up to the fender.

"Why, what are you doing here?" asking Clavering good-naturedly.

"I wanted to speak to you tonight," Anne replied quietly.

"Go on," said Clavering, seating himself and lighting a cigar. "Make it short, because whenever a woman wants to 'speak' to a man it always means a row."

"I hope this does not," replied

Her father looked at her closely. She had a wearied and anxious look, which belied her youth, and she had good cause to be both wearied and anxious a good part of the time. She handed him the newspaper which battened upon scandal, and the first paragraph in it announced the forthcoming divorce of Senator Clavering and his subsequent marriage to a Chicago widow, nearly his age, with a fortune almost as large as his own.

Clavering's strong beating heart gave a jump when he began reading the paragraph, but when he found how far off the scent was the report his countenance cleared. It was as good an opportunity as he could have desired to have it out with Anne, and he was not sorry she had broached the subject.

"Well," he said, laying the paper

down, "are you surprised?"

"No," replied Anne, looking at him

steadily.

"Then we may proceed to discuss it," said Clavering. "I intend to provide handsomely for your mother—and I dare say she will be a hundred times happier out in Iowa among her relations and friends than she can be here."

"I hardly think my mother would look at it from that point of view,"

said Anne.

She controlled her agitation and her indignation admirably, and Clavering saw in her his own cool courage and

resources.

"Of course my mother has felt and known for years that you had no further use for her, now that her drudgery is not necessary to you. But she is, as you know, a very religious woman. She thinks divorces are wrong, and, timid as she is, I believe she would resist a divorce. She would, I am sure, be willing to go away from you and not trouble you any more—and I would go with her. But a divorce—no. And I have the same views that she has, and would urge her to resist to the last—and she will."

She had not raised her tones at all, but Clavering understood her words perfectly. She meant to fight for her mother. He smoked quietly for several minutes, and Anne knew too much to weaken her position by re-

peating her protest.

Then Clavering leaned over to her

and said:

"I think, when you know the circumstances, you will be more than willing to let your mother get the divorce. We were never legally married."

The blood poured into Anne's face. She rose from her chair and stood trembling with anger but also with fear.
"I don't believe—I can't believe—"

She stopped, unable to go on.

"Oh, there's no reflection on your mother or on me, either. We ran away to be married-a couple of young fools under twenty-one. I got the license in Kentucky, but we crossed the Ohio River into Ohio. There we found a minister—an ignorant old fellow and a rogue besides, who didn't know enough to see that the license had no effect in Ohio. And then I found out afterward that he had been prohibited from performing marriage services because of some of his illegal doings in that line. I knew all about it within a week of the marriage, but being ignorant myself I thought the best way was to say nothing. Afterward, when I came to man's estate, I still thought it best to keep it quiet for the sake of you children. And I am willing to keep it quiet now-unless you force me to disclose it. But, understand me-I mean to be divorced in order to marry a lady to whom I am much attached-not this old whited sepulchre from Chicago" -for so Clavering alluded to the widow with millions-"but a lady without a penny. Have you any suspicion to whom I refer?"

"I have not the least suspicion of anyone," Anne replied, as haughtily as if she had all the blood of all the Howards, instead of being the nameless

child she was.

Clavering was secretly surprised and relieved to know this. Then the tongue of gossip had not got hold of his attentions to Elizabeth Darrell. This was indeed rare good fortune. He spoke again.

"So now you know exactly where you stand. If you will let me have my way the thing can be managed quietly. If you oppose me you will

be sorry for it."

"And you mean, if my mother doesn't consent, that you will brand us all—us, your children—as—as—I can't speak the word!"

Anne fixed a pair of blazing eyes on her father, and Clavering never felt more uncomfortable in his life. He had no shame and no remorse, but he really wished that Anne would not gaze at him with those eyes sparkling with

anger and disgust.

I think you don't exactly understand the masculine nature," he said. "I simply mean that I shall have a divorce, and if you don't choose to accept my terms-for, of course, I am dealing with you, not your motherit will be you and not I who proclaim to the world what I have kept quiet

for thirty-five years."

The interview had lasted barely ten minutes, but to Anne Clavering it seemed as if eons of time separated her from the Anne Clavering of half an hour ago. Clavering was unshaken. He had been contemplating this event in his life ever since it happened, thirtyfive years before, and had reckoned himself a magnanimous man in determining not to reveal the truth about his marriage unless he was compelled to-that is to say, unless he could not get a divorce by other means. But Anne had forced his hand, as it were, so let her take the consequences. The repudiation of his wife cost Clavering not a pang. He took no thought of her patience, her years of uncomplaining work for him, her silence under his neglect and abandonment. thought, however, that he had admitted to anyone the illegitimacy of his children gave him a certain degree of discomfort—he felt an inward shock when he spoke the words. But it was not enough to turn him from his will.

Anne sat still for so long that Clavering did not know what to make of it. She had grown very pale, and Clavering suspected that she really had not the strength to rise, which was the truth. The room was so profoundly still that when a smoldering log in the fireplace broke in two and fell apart with a shower of sparks, the slight noise made both Clavering and Anne start.

Anne rose then somewhat unsteadily. Clavering would have liked to offer his arm and to have assisted her to her bedroom, but he was afraid. She walked out of the room without looking at him or speaking to him again, Halfway up the broad and splendid staircase he heard her stop, and, looking out of the half-open door, he saw her shadowy figure sitting on the stairs. After a few moments more she went on up, and he could hear only the faint sound of her silken skirts as she moved. Opposite her mother's door she stopped. There was no sound within and she passed on.

It was one of Elizabeth Darrell's sleepless and harassed nights. About three o'clock she rose from her bed and went to the window. In the great house opposite Clavering's library windows were lighted up, and so were the windows of Anne's boudoir. A sudden suspicion of the truth flashed into Elizabeth's mind.

'His daughter suspects somethinghas discovered something," she thought to herself, panting and terrified. "They

have had a scene.

Elizabeth nor Clavering nor Anne had any sleep that night. ..

VII

THE next day was Mrs. Luttrell's day at home, and in spite of her declared preference for small receptions, a choice little circle of friends, tea and good, plain bread and butter, she contrived to have crowds of visitors, resplendent drawing-rooms, and in the dining-room a brilliant table, glowing with flowers and sparkling with lights, whereon were served most of the kickshaws which Mrs. Luttrell had so severely animadverted on the day before.

It was a field day with Mrs. Luttrell. All the cave-dwellers and all of the smart set seemed to be in evidence at one time or another during the after-The street was blocked with carriages, lackeys stood ten deep around the handsome doors, and the air fluttered with the tissue paper from the many cards that were left. The splendid and unique drawing-rooms

were at their best, and Mrs. Luttrell, standing in the centre of the middle drawing-room, dispensed flatteries to the men and civilities to the women with great gusto. Baskerville was present, doing his part as host, helping out the shy people like Eleanor Baldwin's mother, the handsome, silent Mrs. Brentwood-Baldwin, who was known to be cruelly dragooned by her up-todate daughter. But there are not many shy people to be found in Washington. Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner was not at all shy when she came sailing in, toward six o'clock, with a very handsome young man, dressed in the height of ecclesiastical elegance. The private chaplain was, at last, an attained luxury.

"My dear Mrs. Luttrell," she said cooingly, "may I introduce you to the Reverend Father Milward of the Order

of St. Hereward?"

Mrs. Luttrell's handsome mouth widened in a smile which was subject to many interpretations, and she shook hands cordially with Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner's protégé. Father Milward himself gave Mrs, Luttrell a far-away, ascetic bow, and then, turning to Baskerville, began discussing with him the status of the English education bill. Father Milward gave it as his solemn opinion that the bill did not go far enough in opposing secular education, and thought that the dissenters had been dealt with too favorably by it and under it.

Mrs. Skinner had felt a little nervous at the way her newest acquisition might be received by Mrs. Luttrell, but had determined to put a bold face upon it. And why should anybody be ashamed of achieving one's heart's desire, so long as it is respectable; and what is more respectable and likewise more recherché, than a do-mestic chaplain? And the Reverend Father Milward had been domestic chaplain to an English duke. Nor had his severance with the ducal household been anything but creditable to Father Milward, for the duke, a very unspiritual person, who kept a domestic chaplain on the same principle as he subscribed to the county hunt, had said that he "wouldn't stand any more of Milward's religious fallals, by gad." The chaplain, therefore, had discharged the duke, for the young clergyman's fallals were honest fallals, and he was prepared to go to the stake for them. Instead of the crown of martyrdom, however, he had fallen into Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner's arms, so to speak, and he found it an ecclesiastical paradise of luxury and asceticism, God and mammon, and full of the saintliness of the world.

Before Mrs. Skinner had a chance to tell what position the Reverend Father Milward held in her family, Mrs. Lut-

trell said to her, aside:

"So you've got him! I thought you'd get the upper hand of the bishop. The fact is, you're cleverer than any of the Newport people I've heard of yet. They've got their tiaras and their seagoing yachts and they have the emperor to dinner, but not one of them has a private acolyte, much less a full-grown chaplain. You've done something really original this time, my dear."

Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner did not know exactly how Mrs. Luttrell meant to be taken, but smiled faintly

and said:

"You can't imagine, my dear Mrs. Luttrell, the blessed privilege of having Father Milward under my roof. He has been with me a week, and every day we have had matins, compline and evensong. I have had the billiard-room turned into a chapel temporarily, and it is really sweetbut, of course, I shall have an early English chapel built at each of my houses; I have plenty of ground for a chapel at my Washington house. My servants have been most attentive at the services, and when Lionel or Harold is absent my butler, a very High Churchman, acts as clerk. It is really edifying to see and hear him. You know persons in very humble walks of life sometimes possess great graces and virtues."

"So I have heard," replied Mrs.

Luttrell earnestly.

"I am determined to take Father Milward everywhere with me-I want his holy influence to be shed in the best society. It is beautiful to see him with Lionel and Harold. I hope that one or both of them will develop a vocation for the priesthood. I could do so much for them-build them beautiful churches, lovely parish houses and everything. If one of them should wish to organize a brotherhood in America, as you once suggested, I would build a beautiful brotherhood house at my place on the Hudson. To give to the Church is such a privilege, and to give to these beautiful and poetic orders which our beloved Mother Church in England is organizing has a peculiar charm for me.'

"I see it has," answered Mrs. Luttrell; "and if you have everything else you want, why not get a plain chaplain, just as the Empress Elizabeth of Russia used to get her a new lover whenever she wanted one?"

Mrs. Skinner gave a little start at this. She was a guileless woman and never knew when people were joking unless they told her so; she had never heard of the Empress Elizabeth, and moreover, she was sincerely afraid of Mrs. Luttrell. So she laughed a little and moved away, saying:

"I see Bishop Slater, the secretary's brother, across the room, and I must speak to him. I think the secretary is a dear, and so is the bishop, so nice and high in his church views."

Mrs. Luttrell turned to face an accusing mentor in Richard Baskerville, who had heard a part of the "trying out" of Mrs. James Van Cortlandt Skinner; but before he could speak he caught sight of Anne Clavering entering the wide doors.

He had not thought to see her that day, feeling that what had passed between them in the brougham would keep her away from Mrs. Luttrell's as a place where she would be certain to meet him; for Anne Clavering had all the delicate reserve which a man would wish in the woman he loves. Therefore, not expecting to see her, Baskerville had early in the day despatched

to her a basket of violets and a brief note, in which he asked permission to speak at once to her father. He had received no reply, but expected one before he slept. Anne's appearance, however, in Mrs. Luttrell's drawingroom surprised him; she evidently sought him, and this she would not be likely to do unless she were in some emergency.

To Baskerville's keen eye her face, glowing with an unusual color, her eyes, which were restlessly bright, betrayed some inward agitation. She was very beautifully dressed in velvet and furs, with more of magnificence than she usually permitted herself, and her white-gloved hand played nervously with a superb emerald pendant that hung around her neck by a jeweled chain.

Baskerville was the first person who greeted her, and Mrs. Luttrell was the next.

"This is kind of you," said the latter, all sweetness and affability. "It shows what a nice disposition you have, to come to me today, after the way my nephew made, me kotow to you yesterday. Richard, give Miss Clavering a cup of tea."

Baskerville escorted Anne through the splendid suite of rooms, each speaking right and left and being stopped often to exchange a word with a friend or acquaintance. People smiled after the pair of them, as they do after a pair of suspected lovers.

When they came to a high-arched lobby that led into the dining-room, Baskerville, opening a side door, partly concealed by a screen and a great group of palms, showed Anne into a little breakfast-room, which opened with glass doors on the garden. A hard coal fire burned redly in the grate and the dying sunset poured its last splendors through a huge square window. Baskerville shut the door, and Anne and himself were as much alone as if they had the whole house to themselves.

"I have practiced a gross fraud upon you about the tea," said he, smiling; "but here is a chance for a few minutes alone with you—a chance I shall

take whenever I can get it."

He would have taken her hand, but something in her face stopped him. She had protested and denied him the day before when he told her of his love; but it had not stood materially in his way. Now, however, he saw in an instant there was something of great import that made a barrier between them.

"I wished very much to see you alone and soon; I came here today for

that purpose," she said.

She spoke calmly, but Baskerville saw that it was with difficulty she restrained her agitation.

"Yesterday," she went on, "I told you what I feared about my fa-

ther-"

"And I told you," Baskerville interrupted, "that I would marry you if I could, no matter who or what your father is."

"You were most generous. But you don't know what I know about my father—I only found it out myself last night. I had an interview with him. There was something in a newspaper about his divorcing my mother."

"If he does, and you will marry me, I shall engage to treat your mother with the same respect and attention I should my own. Mrs. Clavering is one of the best of women, and I have

the greatest regard for her."

Anne raised to him a glorified, grateful face. The poor, despised mother, for whom she had fought and was still fighting—the helpless, unfortunate woman who seemed to be in everybody's way except in hers—the offer of kindness and consideration went to Anne Clavering's heart. She wished to say something in the way of thanks to Baskerville, but instead she burst into a sudden passion of tears.

Baskerville, with a lover's ardor, would have comforted her upon his breast, but she kept him at a distance.

"No, no!" she pleaded, weeping.
"Hear me out—let me tell you all."

Baskerville, although at her side, did not, perforce, so much as touch her hand. Anne continued, strangely recovering her calmness as she proceeded:

"I can't repeat all my father said—I have neither the strength nor the time now, but he told me there was an—an—invalidity about his marriage to my mother. She, poor soul, knew nothing of it, and my father said nothing of it, for—for our sakes—his children. But it was no marriage. And last night he told me plainly that if I persuaded my mother to resist the divorce he can prove that she never was—that we are—"

She stopped. Her tears had ceased to flow, her face was deathly pale; a heartbreaking composure had taken the place of her agitation. Baskerville, however, had become slightly agitated. He comprehended instantly what she meant. She was not even the legitimate child of James Clavering. Small as the credit of his name might be, it was not hers. Baskerville, as a man of honorable lineage, had a natural shrinking from ignoble birth, but it did not blind him to the inherent honor in Anne Clavering nor turn his heart away from her. He recovered his coolness in a moment or two, and was about to speak when she forestalled him hurriedly.

"So, you see, you must forget all that happened yesterday. I thank you a thousand times for—for—what you once felt for me. If things were different—if I were—but, as you see,

it is quite impossible now."

"And do you suppose," said Baskerville, after a pause, "that I would give you up—that I could give you up? I am afraid you don't yet know

what love is."

Their conversation had gone on in tones so low that they might have been discussing the affairs of total strangers. Baskerville made no attempt to take her hand, to beguile her with endearments. It was a moment solemn for both of them, and Baskerville spoke with the calm appeal of a noble and steadfast love. It was not the sweet seduction of passion, but the earnest claim and covenant of love upon which he relied.

Anne remained with her eyes fixed on the floor. Baskerville said no more. He scorned to plead his right, and his silence wrought for him far more than any spoken words. His manner was one of questioning reproach, a reproach most dear to a loving and high-minded woman. The meaning of it came softly but inevitably upon Anne Clavering. It was no light sacrifice for a man of sensitive honor, of flawless repute, to link himself in any way with a woman dowered as Anne Clavering was dowered by her father's evil-doing, but Baskerville reckoned it as nothing when weighed in the balance against his honorable love. At last the whole beauty of his conduct dawned full upon her: Baskerville knew the very instant when she grasped all that he meant. The color began to mount to her pale cheeks; she sighed deeply and raised her eyes, now softly radiant, to his face.

"You are very, very generous," she said. "It is good to have known a man so generous—and it is sweeter than I can tell you to have been loved by such a man. But I can be generous, too. It is too great a sacrifice for you. I cannot accept it."

To this Baskerville only replied:
"Tell me but this—one word will
settle it forever. Do you love me?"

Anne remained silent, but the silences of a woman who loves are more eloquent than words. The next minute she was fast in Baskerville's arms, who would not let her go; and they had a foretaste of paradise, such as only those know whose love is mingled with sacrifice, which is the ultimate height of the soul's tenderness.

But their time was of necessity short, and what Anne had told Baskerville required instant consideration. When Anne would have persisted in her refusal Baskerville would not listen, but turned to the matter of her interview with Clavering.

"This is a question which must be met at once, because I believe your father quite capable of carrying out his threat. And your mother must be the first one to be considered. What do you think she would wish?"

It was the first time in her life that Anne Clavering had ever heard anyone say that her mother was to be considered at all. The great wave of gratitude surged up again in her heart—the poor, helpless, ignorant, loving mother, who had no friend but her—and Baskerville. She looked at him with eyes shining and brimming and laid a timid, tender hand upon his shoulder.

"I ought not to accept your love-

"You can't prevent it," replied Baskerville.

"Then, if gratitude-"

But when lovers talk of gratitude it means more kisses.

The pale dusk of winter now filled the room, and there was no light except the red glow of the fire. Basker-ville would have asked nothing better in life than an hour in that quiet, twilit room, nor would Anne either; but, woman-like, Anne remembered that there were some other persons in the world besides themselves, and made as if to go; nor would she heed Basker-ville's pleadings to remain longer. As they reached the door Baskerville said:

"Think over what you wish me to do, and write me when you determine. Of course I must see your father immediately. And we must take my aunt into our confidence, for it is through her that we must meet."

Poor Anne had not had much time for that sweet trifling which is the joy of lovers, but at the idea of Mrs. Luttrell being taken into their confidence a faint smile came to her quivering lips.

"The whole town will know all about

"No—I can frighten my aunt—and she sha'n't tell until we are ready."

Anne's cheeks were flaming, and she said, as all women do who have to face inspection directly after a love scene:

"If I could but get away without being seen."

"It is easy enough; this glass door opens."

Baskerville led her through the glass door into the garden and around to the front of the house, where in the throng of arriving and departing visitors not even the lynx-eyed Jeems Yellowplush who opened the brougham door suspected that Miss Clavering had not walked straight from Mrs. Lut-

trell's drawing-room.

Anne lay back in the carriage, lost in a dream of love and gratitude. All her life long she had fought alone and single-handed for the poor, oppressed mother. She knew perfectly well all her mother's ignorance, her awkward manners, but Anne knew also the patience, the goodness, the forgiving and unselfish nature which lay under that unpromising exterior. Not one point of Baskerville's conduct was lost on Anne Clavering; and if love and gratitude could repay him she meant that he should be repaid. And in the coming catastrophes she would have Baskerville's strong arm and masculine good sense to depend upon. She had read the newspapers attentively, and she believed that her father and his associates would be found guilty of all that was alleged against them; and she knew that the divorce was a fixed thing, not to be altered by anybody.

That of itself might be expected, in the ordinary course, to exile the family from Washington, but Anne doubted it. Elise and Lydia would not have delicacy enough to go away if they wished to remain; and their fondness for the smaller fry of the diplomatic corps was quite strong enough to keep them in Washington when it would be better for them to live elsewhere. Reginald, in spite of his weakness and narrowness, had a sense of dignity that would make him

keep out of the public eye.

For herself, Anne had determined, before her interview with Baskerville, that a quiet home in the little Iowa town where her mother was born and bred would be the place for her mother and herself; and she had thought with calm resignation of the change in her life from the gaiety and brilliance of Washington to the quiet seclusion of a country town. It would not be all loss, however, for her path in Washington had not been entirely roses.

Washington is a place of great and varied interests, where one may live any sort of life desired; and it is not easy to adapt those who have lived there to any other spot in America. But now these words of Richard Baskerville's, his manly, compelling love, had altered all that for her. She felt it to be her destiny—her happy destiny-to live with him in Washington. His name and high repute would protect her. She would not ask of him to have her mother always with her-although a more submissive and unobtrusive creature never lived than Mrs. Clavering. It would be enough if she could pass a part of the year with Anne, while Reginald took care of her the other part, and both of them would vie with each other in doing their duty. Her heart swelled whenever she thought of the consideration Baskerville had shown toward Mrs. Clavering; it would make the poor woman happy to know it, for this woman, used to the bread of humiliation, keenly felt smallest attention paid her. And then Anne fell into a sweet dream of delight and was happy in spite of herself. She came down from heaven only when the carriage stopped in front of the great stone house of Senator Clavering.

At the same hour Mrs. Luttrell sat before the fire in the great empty drawing-room, from which the guests had just departed. Mrs. Luttrell was burning with curiosity to know what had become of Baskerville and Anne Clavering when they disappeared so mysteriously-for Baskerville had not returned, either. The fact is, while Anne was lost in a soft ecstasy, Baskerville, smoking furiously at a big black cigar, was walking aimlessly about the streets, his heart beating high. He looked at his watch; it was seven o'clock, and it occurred to him it was time to go back to Mrs. Luttrell and make provision for his future meetings with Anne Clavering and, possibly, their marriage from Mrs. Luttrell's house, if circumstances should follow as he expected. When he walked in, Mrs. Luttrell's greeting was:

"Where's Anne Clavering?"
"Safe at home, I trust," replied

Baskerville, throwing the end of his cigar into the fire.

"And what became of you, pray, when you two went prancing off, and never came back?"

"I took Miss Clavering into the morning-room."

"You did, eh?"

"I did."

"And what happened in the morn-

ing-room?"

"I decline to state—except that Miss Clavering and I are to be married-perhaps in this house. Senator Clavering, you know, and I are at feud, and the coming revelations about him make it very likely that he won't have a house here very long"-Baskerville had in mind Clavering's divorce - "and our meetings - Miss Clavering's and mine-are to take place under your roof, with yourself to play gooseberry. Even if you are due at the biggest dinner going at the house of the smartest of the smart and the newest of the new, you shall stay here, if we have to chain you up." Upon my word!"

"And you are not to open your mouth to a living being about what I am telling you, until I give you permission. I know your idea of a secret, Sara Luttrell—it means something that is worth telling. But if you let one ray of light leak out I shall never speak to you again, and shall tell your

age all over Washington."

Mrs. Luttrell looked at Baskerville

with admiring eyes.

"That's the way your uncle used to talk to me. No one else in the world ever did it, except you and him."

"Now, will you obey me?"

"You are an impudent rogue. Yes,

I will obey you."

"Then go to your desk this minute and write Miss Clavering a note offering the hospitality of your roof and your services as chaperon whenever she requires it; and mind you make it a very affectionate note." Baskerville led Mrs. Luttrell to her desk, where she wrote her note.

"Will this do?" she asked, and read

to him:

"DEAR ANNE CLAVERING:

"My nephew, Richard Baskerville, tells me you and he are to be married, and as he is at feud with your father he can't go to your house. Therefore you must come to mine. I need not say that my services as chaperon are at your disposal. I think you know that I am a sincere person, and when I tell you that I think Richard Baskerville would do well to marry you even if you hadn't a rag to your back you may be sure I think so. And you will do well to marry im. He is like another Richard who died long ago—the husband of my youth.

"Affectionately yours,
"SARA LUTTRELL."

"That will do," replied Baskerville, and taking Mrs. Luttrell's small white hand in his he kissed it—kissed it so with the air and look and manner of the man dead fifty years and more that Mrs. Luttrell's bright old eyes filled with sudden tears—she, the woman who was supposed to have been born and to have lived without a heart.

VIII

ANNE CLAVERING was engaged to dine out, as usual, during the season, the evening of the afternoon when happiness had come to her. She was so agitated, so overcome with the tempests of emotions through which she had passed in the last twenty-four hours, that she longed to excuse herself from the dinner and to have a few hours of calming solitude in her own room. But she was too innately polite and considerate to slight and inconvenience her hostess, and so resolutely prepared to fulfil her engagement. She could not resist spending in her mother's room the half hour which intervened from the time she returned home until she should go to her room for a short rest and the making of her evening toilet.

Mrs. Clavering was not usually keen of apprehension, but Anne scarcely thought she could conceal from her mother's affectionate and solicitous eyes all the feelings with which she palpitated. Mrs. Clavering loved the excuse of a trifling indisposition, that she might keep her room and be free from the necessity of seeing visitors and of being seen by the army of insubordinate foreign servants in the Clavering household. She was full of questions about Anne's afternoon at Mrs. Luttrell's, and the first question she asked was whether that nice young man, Mr. Baskerville, was there. At that Anne blushed so suddenly and vividly that it could not escape Mrs. Clavering.

"Why, Anne," she said, "I believe Mr. Baskerville must have been paying you some compliments! Anyhow, he's the nicest and politest man I've seen in Washington, and I hope, when you marry, you'll marry a man just like him. And I do hope, my dear, you won't be no old maid. Old maids

don't run in my family."

This was Mrs. Clavering's guileless method of suggestive matchmaking. Anne, with a burning face, kissed her and went to her room for a little while alone in the dark with her raptureand afterward purgatory-in being dressed to go out. She had already begun to debate whether it would be well to tell her secret to her mother at once. The poor lady was really not well, and any thought of impending change for her best beloved might well distress her. But her simple words convinced Anne that Mrs. Clavering would not be made unhappy by the news that Richard Baskerville and Anne loved each other. Rather would it rejoice her, and as there had been no time to talk seriously about the date of the marriage she need not be disturbed at the thought of an immediate separation from Anne.

All this Anne thought out while her hair was being dressed and her dainty slippers put on her feet and her Paris gown adjusted by her maid. In that little interval of solitude before, when she lay in her bed in the soft darkness, she had thought of nothing but Richard Baskerville and the touch of his lips upon hers. But with her maid's knock at the door the outer world had

entered, with all its urgent claims and insistence. But through all her perplexities still sounded the sweet refrain, "He loves me." She thought, as she fastened the string of pearls around her white neck, "The last time I wore these pearls I was not happy—and now!"

And so, on her way to the dinner and throughout it and back home again the thought of Richard Baskerville never left her; the sound of his voice in her ears, the touch of his lips upon hers, and above all the nobility of his loving her purely for herself—rare fortune for the daughter of a man so rich, even if not so wicked, as James Clavering. Anne tasted of joy for the first time and drank deep of it. She was glad to be alone with her love and her happiness, to become acquainted with it, to fondle it, to hold it close to her heart.

She was very quiet and subdued at the dinner, and by a sort of mistaken telepathy among the others present it was understood that Miss Clavering felt deeply the situation in which Senator Clavering was placed. But Anne Clavering was the happiest woman in Washington that night. Even the impending disgrace of her father, of which she was well assured, was softened and illumined by the lofty and self-sacrificing love bestowed upon her by Richard Baskerville.

When she came home, after eleven o'clock, she stopped, as she always did, at her mother's door. And Mrs. Clavering calling her softly, Anne went into the room. With her mother's hand in hers she told the story of her love and

happiness.

If she had ever doubted whether it would be well to tell Mrs Clavering, that doubt was dispelled. The poor lady wept, it is true, being tender-hearted and given to tears like the normal woman, but her tears were those of happiness.

"I've been a-wishing and a-hoping for it ever since I saw him that Sunday," said the poor soul. "I want you to have a good husband, Anne, the sort of husband my father was to my mother; never a cross word between 'em before us children, ma always having the dinner on time and the old leather armchair Rip for pa—we didn't have but one easy-chair in the house in them days. And pa always saying ma was better looking than any one of her daughters, and kissin' her before us all on their wedding anniversary, and giving her a little present, if it wasn't no more than a neck ribbon; for they was always poor; but they loved each other, and lived as married folks ought to live together."

"If Richard and I can live like that I shouldn't mind being poor myself, dear mother, because I remember well enough when we were poor, and when you used to sew for us, and do all the rough work, and indulged us far too much—and I was happier then than I have been since—until now," Anne

replied softly.

Mrs. Clavering sighed.

"All the others, except you, seems to have forgot all about it."

This was the nearest Mrs. Clavering ever came to a complaint or a re-

proach.

And then Anne, with loving pride, told her of Baskerville's kind words about her—of his voluntary offers of respect and attention. Mrs. Clavering, sitting up in bed, put her large, toil-worn hands to her face and wept

a little.

"Did he say that, my dear, about your poor, ignorant mother: I tell you, Anne, there are some gentlemen in this world-men who feel sorry for a woman like me and treat 'em kind and right, like Mr. Baskerville does. Now, you tell him for me - because I'd never have the courage to tell him myself-that I thank him a thousand times, and he'll never be made to regret his kindness to me-and tell him anything else that would be proper to say, and especially that I ain't goin' to bother him. But I tell you, Anne, I'm very happy this night—I wouldn't have gone without knowing this for anything-not for anything.

Then the mother and daughter, woman-like, wept in each other's

arms, and were happy and comforted.

The next morning brought Anne a letter from Baskerville. Clouded, as Anne Clavering's love affair was, with many outside perplexities, restraints, shames and griefs, she did not miss all of what the French call the little flowers of love - among others the being wakened from sleep in the morning by a letter from her lover. Her first waking thought in her luxurious bedroom was that a letter from Baskerville would soon be in her hands. And when the maid entered and laid it on her pillow and departed Anne held it to her heart before breaking the seal. Then, lighting her bedside candle in the dark of the winter morning, she read her precious letter. In it Baskerville told her that he was urgently called to New York that day, but would return the next-and his first appointment after his return would be to see Senator Clavering, for they must arrange, for obvious reasons, to be married at the earliest possible moment. There were not many endearing terms in the letter-for Baskerville, like most men of fine sense and deep feeling, did not find it easy to put his love on paper; but those few words were enough-so Anne Clavering thought. And Baskerville told her that she would receive a letter from him daily, in lieu of the visit which he could not pay her at her father's house.

Baskerville returned to Washington on the following night, for a reason rare in the annals of lovers. The last meeting of the investigating committee was to be held the next day, and Baskerville, having succeeded in exposing Clavering, must be on hand to complete the work. But before doing this he had to tell Clavering of his intention to marry his daughter.

The committee met daily at eleven o'clock, but it was not yet ten o'clock on a dull, cold winter morning when Baskerville took his way to the Capitol, certain of finding Clavering at work by that hour, for the senator had most of the best habits of the best men—

among them industry, order and

punctuality in a high degree.

Baskerville went straight to the committee-room set apart for Clavering, for, not being chairman of a committee, he had no right to a room. His colleagues, however, on the same principle that a condemned man is given everything he wishes to eat, supplied Clavering generously with quarters in which to prepare his alleged defense. Two of the handsomest rooms in the Senate wing were therefore set apart for him, and to these Baskerville took his way.

The messenger at the door took in his card, and he heard Clavering, who was walking up and down the floor dictating to a stenographer, say, in

his agreeable voice:

"Show the gentleman into the room

at once.'

Baskerville entered, and Clavering greeted him politely and even cordially. He did not, however, offer to shake hands with Baskerville, who had purposely encumbered himself with his hat and coat, so the avoidance on the part of each was cleverly dis-

"Pray excuse me for calling so early, senator," said Baskerville composedly, "but may I have a word in private with you?"

Clavering was infinitely surprised, but he at once answered coolly:

"Certainly. If you will go with me into the next room—it is my colleague's committee-room, but there is no meet-

ing of the committee today, so he allows me the privilege of seeing people there when it is vacant-you see, I am snowed under here"; which was true. The masses of books, papers, typewriters' and stenographers' desks filled the room in an uncom-

fortable degree.

Clavering led the way into the next room. It was large and luxuriously furnished with all the elegancies with which legislators love to surround themselves. He offered Baskerville one of the large leather chairs in front of the blazing fire, took another one himself and fixed his bright, dark eyes on Baskerville, who took the advice of old Horace and plunged at once

into his subject.

"I presume that what I have to tell you will surprise you, senator-and no doubt displease you. I have asked your daughter, Miss Anne Clavering, to marry me, and she has been good enough to consent. And I feel it due to you, of course, to inform you at the earliest moment."

Clavering was secretly astounded. No such complication had dawned He knew, of course, that upon him. Anne and Baskerville were acquainted and met often in society; he had by no means forgotten that solitary visit of Baskerville's, but attached no particular meaning to it. His own pressing affairs, both of the heart and the pocket, had engrossed him so that he had given very little thought to anything else. But it was far from James Clavering to show himself disconcerted in any man's presence, least of all in an enemy's presence. His mind, which worked as rapidly as powerfully, grasped in an instant that this was really a stroke of good fortune for Anne. He knew too much of human nature to suppose that it counted for anything with him. Men like Baskerville do not change their characters or their principles by falling in love. Baskerville might possibly have altered his methods in the investigation, but this happened to be the very last day of it, and things had gone too far to be transformed at this stage of the game. However, it gave Clavering a species of intense inward amusement to find himself in a position to assume a paternal air to Baskerville. After a moment, therefore, he said, with a manner of the utmost geniality:

"Displease me, did you say? Nothing would please me better. Anne is by long odds the best of my children. She deserves a good husband, and I need not say that your high reputation and admirable character are thoroughly well known to me as to

all the world."

All interviews with prospective fa-

thers-in-law are embarrassing, but perhaps no man was ever more embarrassingly placed than Baskerville at that moment. He could not but admire Clavering's astuteness, which made it necessary for Baskerville to explain that while seeking to marry Clavering's daughter he would by no means be understood as countenancing Clavering.

Baskerville colored slightly, and paused. Clavering was entirely at ease, and was enjoying the humor of the situation to the full. It is a rare treat to be enabled to act the benevolent father-in-law, anxious only for the welfare of his child, to a man who has been trying for two years to railroad the prospective father-in-law into

State's prison.

"I think, senator," said Baskerville after a moment, "that we needn't beat about the bush. My course in this investigation has shown from the beginning my views on the case. They are not favorable to you. I have no right to expect your approval, but Miss Clavering is of age and can make her own choice. She has made it. and I have no intention of giving her time to back out of it. It is, however, due to you as her father that I should speak to you of certain matters -my means, for example. I can't give your daughter the luxuries-I may say the magnificence, with which you have surrounded her, but I can give her all that a gentlewoman requires. She does not ask for more."

Clavering stroked his chin meditatively, and with a gleam of acute satisfaction in his eye looked at Baskerville, uncomfortable but resolute, be-

fore him.

"My dear boy," said he, "I've given my consent already, and I rather think, with such a pair as you and my daughter Anne, it wouldn't do much good to withhold it."

Baskerville could have brained him with pleasure for that "My dear boy."

but he only said:

"Quite right, senator. I also ask the privilege of speaking to Mrs. Clavering." "Mrs. Clavering is very ailing—hasn't been out of her room for a week. But she's the last person in the world likely to oppose Anne."

"I shall try to persuade Miss Clavering to have our marriage take place very shortly," said Baskerville pres-

ently.

"Certainly; as soon as you like."

Clavering sat back in his chair smiling. Never was there so obliging a father-in-law.

Baskerville rose. The interview had

lasted barely five minutes.

"Thank you very much for your acquiescence. Good morning," said the prospective bridegroom, bowing himself out. Not one word had been said about any fortune that Anne might have, nor had Baskerville touched

Clavering's hand.

The senator went back to his stenographers. He was thoughtful, and did not get into the full swing of his work for at least fifteen minutes. He felt a kind of envy of Richard Baskerville. who had no investigations to face and never would have. He had no divorce problem in hand and never would have. His love was not of the sort which had to be forced upon a woman and the woman coerced and overborne and almost menaced into accepting it. On the whole, Clavering concluded, looking back upon a long career of successful villainy, that if he had his life to live over again he would live more respectably.

That day the last meeting of the committee was held, and within an hour the two men, Baskerville and Clavering, faced each other in the committee-room, each a fighting man and fighting with all his strength. Baskerville took no part in the oral arguments, but, sitting at one end of the long table in the luxurious, mahoganyfurnished and crimson-curtained committee-room, he supplied data, facts and memoranda which proved Clavering to have been a thief and a perjurer.

The committee-room was only moderately full. The hearings had been open, but the crush had been so great that it was decided to exclude all ex-

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cept those who were directly interested in the hearing, and those lucky enough to get cards of admission. It was an eager and even a sympathetic crowd. The same personal charm which had been a great factor in Clavering's success was still his. As he sat back, his leonine face and head outlined against the crimson wall behind him, his eyes full of the light of courage, cool, resolute and smiling, it was impossible not to admire him. He had no great virtues, but he had certain great qualities.

As the hearing proceeded Clavering's case grew blacker. Against some of the most damning facts he had some strong perjured evidence, but the perjurers were exposed with the evidence. Against all, he had his own strenuous denial of everything and the call for proof. But proof was forthcoming at every point. And it was all Richard Baskerville's handiwork. Clavering knew this so well that although perfectly alert as to the statements made by the keen-eyed, sharp-witted lawyers from New York, he kept his eyes fixed on Baskerville, who was handing out paper after paper and making whispered explanations-who was, in short, the arsenal for the weapons so mercilessly used against Clavering.

The two men, engaged in this deadly and tremendous strife, which involved not only millions of money and a seat in the United States Senate, but also the characters and souls of men, eyed each other with a certain respect. was no man of ordinary mold whom Baskerville had sought to destroy, and that Clavering would be destroyed there was now no reasonable doubt. This last day's work meant expulsion from the Senate—a disgrace so huge, so far-reaching, that it was worse than sentencing a man to death. Apart from the degree of honesty in Clavering's own party, it was perfectly well understood that no party would dare to go before the country assuming the burden of the gigantic frauds of which he was being convicted. And it was due to Baskerville that the evidence to convict had been found. All that the other lawyers had done was insignificant beside the two years of patient research, the disentangling of a thousand complicated legal threads, which was Baskerville's work. Some of the evidence he presented had been collected in the wildest parts of the West and South at the imminent risk of his life; all of it had required vast labor and learning. Being a natural lover of fighting Baskerville, in the beginning, had taken a purely human interest in tracking this man down and had thought himself engaged in a righteous work in driving him out of public life. He still knew he was right in doing this, but it had long since become a painful and irksome task to him. He had come to love this man's daughter, of all the women in the world, to love her so well and to confide in her so truly that not even her parentage could keep him from marrying But he knew that he was stabbing her to the heart. She had forgiven him in advance; like him, love and sacrifice had asserted their rights and reigned in their kingdom, but that she must suffer a cruel abasement for her father's iniquities Baskerville knew. And with this knowledge nothing but his sense of duty and honor kept him at his post.

The committee sat from eleven in the morning until two in the afternoon. Then, after a short adjournment, it met again. It sat again until seven, and a final adjournment was reached. When James Clavering walked out into the sharp January night, the Capitol behind him showing whitely in the gleaming of the multitudes of stars, he knew himself a beaten and ruined man—beaten and ruined by two men—James Clavering and Richard Basker-

ville.

Baskerville determined to walk the long stretch between the Capitol and his own house; he wanted the fresh air and the solitude in order to recover himself, for he, too, had been under a terrific strain. As he walked rapidly down the hill Clavering's carriage passed him—the same brougham in which Baskerville had told Anne Clavering of his love. An electric lamp

shone for a moment into the carriage. and revealed Clavering sitting upright, his head raised, his fists clenched; he was a fighting man to the last.

IX

It was the gayest season Washington had ever known. There was a continuous round of entertaining at the White House, unofficial as well as official. The different Embassies vied with one another in the number and splendor of their festivities; and the smart set entered into a merry war among themselves as to which should throw open their doors oftenest, collect the largest number of guests, and make the most lavish and overpower-

ing display of luxury.

The Claverings did their part, chiefly engineered by Clavering himself, and abetted by Elise and Lydia. Clavering had good reason to suspect that the report of the investigating committee would be ready within the month. It was now the middle of January. Shrove Tuesday came on the fourteenth of February, St. Valentine's Day, and this was the evening selected for the grand musical and ball which were to complete the season. Other musicals had been given in Washington, but none like this; other balls, but this was meant to surpass them all. It had theretofore been enough to get artists from the Metropolitan Opera; it remained for Clavering to import a couple of singers from Paris for the one occasion. A Hungarian band, touring America, was held over a steamer in order to come to Washington and play at the ball. The shops of Vienna were ransacked for favors for the cotillion, and the champagne to be served came from a king's cellars.

All this Anne Clavering regarded with disgust and aversion. She felt sure that her father was soon to be hurled from public life, and deservedly so. Her mother's health was giving her grave alarm. She was at all times opposed to the excesses of luxury and

fashion which delighted the pagan souls of Elise and Lydia, and now it was an additional mortification to her on Baskerville's account. He, she felt convinced, was conscious of the brazen effrontery, the shocking bad taste of it all, and considerate as he was in not speaking of it, her soul was filled with shame to suppose what he thought. She began to hate the lavish luxury in which she dwelt, and looked forward eagerly to the time when she could live modestly and quietly in a house not so grand as to excite the transports of all the society correspondents who got a sight of its stu-

pendous splendors.

Mrs. Clavering's illness, though slight, continued, and gave Anne a very good excuse for withdrawing somewhat from general society. And it also gave her time for those charming meetings at Mrs. Luttrell's house, where she and Richard Baskerville tasted the true joy of living. Mrs. Luttrell nobly redeemed her promise, and would have sent every day for Anne to come to tea; as Mrs. Luttrell did not often dine at home without guests, the best tête-à-tête she could offer the lovers was tea in the little morning-room by the firelight. But Anne, with natural modesty, did not always accept Mrs. Luttrell's urgent invitations. When she did, however, she and Baskerville always had an enchanted half hour to themselves in the dusk, while Mrs. Luttrell considerately disappeared, to take the half hour's beauty sleep which she declared essential, during some part of every day, for the preservation of her charms.

The lovers also met more than once at the Thorndykes', at little dinners à quatre. Mrs. Thorndyke would write a note to Anne, asking her on various pleas to come and dine with Thorndyke and herself; and as soon as Anne had accepted there would be a frantic call over the telephone for Thorndyke, in which Mrs. Thorndyke would direct him at the peril of his life to go immediately in search of Baskerville, and to bring him home to dinner. And Thorndyke, like the obedient American husband, would do as he was bidden, and produce Baskerville with great punctuality. How far Constance Thorndyke's own acute perceptions were accountable for this and how far Mrs. Luttrell's incurable propensity for taking the world into her confidence was, nobody could tell. At all events, it made four people happy; and if anything could have made Baskerville and Anne more in love with the ideal of marriage it was to see the serene happiness, the charming home life of Senator

and Mrs. Thorndyke.

Baskerville had not ceased to press for an early date for his marriage, but Mrs. Clavering's indisposition and the posture of Clavering's affairs deferred the actual making of the arrangements. It was to be a very simple wedding, Anne stipulated; and Baskerville, with more than the average man's dread of a ceremony full of display, agreed promptly. Some morning, when Mrs. Clavering was well, Anne and he would be quietly married, go from the church to the train, and after a few days return to Baskerville's house. And Anne promised herself, and got Baskerville to promise her, the indulgence of a quiet domestic life -a thing she had not known since the golden shower descended upon James Clavering.

Clavering had said nothing to Anne in regard to Baskerville's interview with him, nor had the father and daughter exchanged one word with each other, beyond the ordinary civilities of life, since that midnight conversation in which Clavering had announced his intention of getting a divorce. Neither had he said anything to Mrs. Clavering, and his plans were entirely unknown to his family. By extraordinary good fortune not the smallest suspicion fell on the pale, handsome, silent Mrs. Darrell across the way, with her widow's veil thrown

back from her graceful head.

In those weeks, when Anne Clavering saw as little of the world as she could, she occasionally took quiet and solitary walks—walks in which Baskerville would gladly have joined her.

But Anne, with the over-delicacy of one who might be open to the suspicion of not being delicate enough, would not agree to see him except under the chaperonage of Mrs. Luttrell. And twice in those solitary walks she met Elizabeth Darrell, also alone. Both women regarded each other curiously, meanwhile averting their eyes. Anne knew quite well who Elizabeth was, and at their second meeting, quite close to Elizabeth's door, Anne was moved by the true spirit of courtesy and neighborly kindness to speak to her. She said, with a pleasant bow and smile:

"This, I believe, is Mrs. Darrell, our neighbor, and I am Miss Clavering. I have the pleasure of knowing your

father, General Brandon."

Elizabeth received this advance with such apparent haughtiness that Anne, her face flushing, made some casual remark and went into her own house. In truth, Elizabeth was frightened and surprised beyond measure, and felt herself so guilty that she knew not where to look or what to say, and literally fled from the sight of James Clavering's innocent daughter as if she had been an accusing conscience.

Meanwhile the preparations for the grand St. Valentine's musical and ball went gaily on. Clavering himself showed unwonted interest in it. He was as insensible of public approval or disapproval as any man well could be; nevertheless he hoped that the report of the investigating committee would not be made public until after the great function on Shrove Tuesday. It pleased his fancy for the spectacular to think that the last entertainment he gave in Washington-for he well knew it would be the last—should be so full of gorgeous splendor, so superbly unique that it would be remembered for a decade.

He told this to Elizabeth Darrell; for although the investigation was closed, Clavering trumped up some specious requests for more of Brandon's information and assistance on certain alleged general points, and by

this means still contrived to see Eliza-

beth once or twice a week.

He tried to persuade Elizabeth to come to the grand festivity, and was deeply in earnest in his effort. He counted on its effect upon her when he should tell her that she could have similar entertainments whenever she liked, in a much larger and more splendid city than Washington—Lon-

don or Paris, for example.

Elizabeth, however, recoiled with something like horror from the idea of going to Clavering's house and being hospitably received by his wife and daughters, for she had reached the point when Clavering's bribes—for so his love-making might be considered—were always in her mind. At one time she would feel so oppressed with her loneliness, her poverty, her disappointments that she would be almost eager for the splendid destiny which Clavering offered her; at another time she would shrink from it with loathing.

However, Clavering's best argument -his stupendous wealth-was always, in some form, before her eyes. Every time she went out of doors or even looked out of her window she saw the evidences of Clavering's wealth-his magnificent house, his army of servants, his superb equipages, his automobiles of every description. She could not get away from it, and it made her own shabby home seem the shabbier and the narrower every day she lived in it. Moreover, she was at that dangerous age when a woman is brought face to face with her destiny; when she is forced to say goodbye to her girlhood, and to reckon upon life without first youth or first

love.

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And after Hugh Pelham's behavior, why should she reckon on love at all? Was there such a thing as love? He had apparently loved her with the noblest love; it had lasted many years, and finally, in a day, in an hour, for the merest paltry consideration of money, he had not only forgotten her, he had persecuted her. If it were not her fate to know the very ultimate sweetness

of love, at least she might have known its consolation.

Now that Pelham was lost to her she began to think reproachfully, as women will, of what he might have done for her. If he had been true to her-or even decent to her-she would never have been in those desperate straits in London; she would never have been in her present cruel position, for the instant her father knew of her embarrassments she knew he would sell the roof over his head to pay back the debt; and she would never have dreamed of marrying Clavering. All these troubles came from her having believed in loveand perhaps there was no such thing, after all. But in thinking of marrying Clavering and exchanging her present miserable existence for that promised dazzling London life, a shadow would fall across it—Hugh Pelham's shadow. How would she face him? How could she conceal from him that she had sold herself to this man? And how could she visit him with the scorn he deserved if she had so easily bartered herself away?

Clavering saw the conflict in Elizabeth's mind, and it gave him a species of sardonic amusement at his own expense. Here he was, ready to sacrifice so much for this woman who had nothing, who could scarcely be brought to look upon what he offered her, and who had kept him at such a distance that he had not once touched

her hand in private.

He felt himself in many ways at a disadvantage with Elizabeth Darrell. He was, like all men brought up in humble surroundings, unused to clean and highly organized women, and he did not exactly know how to appeal to such women or how to classify them. One moment Elizabeth would appear to him cleverer than the cleverest man, the next he saw in her some feminine foible that made her seem like a precocious child.

Yet all the time Clavering maintained, in his quietly overbearing way, that the whole affair of the marriage was fixed; but he was not so certain

frank with her.

as he professed. He would talk of their plans—they would be married and go to London, and Elizabeth might have any sort of an establishment she liked. She was already well known and well connected there, and he candidly admitted to himself that it would probably be a season or two before London society would find out exactly what sort of a person he was. He warned Elizabeth not to expect any attention from the American ambassador, and was, in short, perfectly

He saw that the idea of a life of splendor in London had its attraction for Elizabeth. She could not dare to remain in Washington, and she had no ties elsewhere in her own country. Clavering's manners, spite of his origin and career, were admirable, and she would have no occasion to blush for him in societya point on which well-bred women are sensitive. She knew, in externals, he would compare favorably with any of the self-made Americans who buy their way into English society. For herself, her birth and breeding lifted her far above the average titled American woman, whose papa or mama has bought her a title as they bought her a French doll in her childhood. And London was so large, and so little was really understood there of American life and manners, that Elizabeth felt they would be comparatively safe in London-if-if-

She had taken to reading the newspapers attentively, and had followed the investigation closely. She made herself some sort of a vague promise that should Clavering be exonerated she would marry him, but if he should be proved a scoundrel she would not. But she was already inwardly con-

vinced that he was guilty.

He told her, the first time he had a chance, of Baskerville's interview with him—told it with such humor, such raciness, such enjoyment of Baskerville's uncomfortable predicament, that Elizabeth, though little given to merriment, was obliged to laugh.

"Of course," he said, "they will be

married shortly. Baskerville has a fine position here not showy, you know, but the right sort. He has a comfortable fortune, too. Gad! at his age I would have thought myself as rich as Rockefeller if I had had as much. Now it wouldn't keep me in automobiles. I shall provide for Anne handsomely, and besides she will get everything I give her mother, which will be in itself a handsome fortune Oh, I'm not mean about giving money to my family. Just as soon as Elise and Lydia get the cash I intend to give them, when I get the divorce. they will both be sure to marry some foreign sprig-they have a whole forest of them here and at those foreign watering-places. I shall give Reginald quite as much as he will know how to use, and that will still leave me enough to make you one of the richest women in the world."

Then he redoubled his urging that Elizabeth should come to the grand musical; but she refused his proposition with such violence that he thought it prudent to say no more about it.

General Brandon, however, had accepted with pleasure, and quite looked forward to the event. But the very day before, he came home from his office with a bad attack of rheumatism, and was forced to take to his bed. In the afternoon of the next day, while Elizabeth was sitting by her father's bedside reading to him, and occasionally giving furtive glances at the great masses of palms and magnificent flowering plants being carried into Clavering's house, a card was brought up to her. It was inscribed, "Mr. Angus Macbean."

So the solicitor had carried out his threat at last! Elizabeth's heart gave a great jump, and then seemed as if dead within her. But she maintained some outward composure, and said she would see the gentleman in a few moments; and telling General Brandon that it was an acquaintance of other days, she left the room. She went to her own room to recover herself a little, before descending to meet the man through whom Hugh Pelham had per-

secuted her ever since her husband's

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When she entered the drawing-room Mr. Macbean rose and greeted her politely. Elizabeth answered his greeting coldly, and Macbean, who had seen several Scotch duchesses at a distance, thought he had never beheld anything quite so haughty as this American woman. She remained standing, and Mr. Macbean, perceiving she was not likely to ask him to sit, coolly took a chair, and Elizabeth, perforce, sat too.

"I have come in the interests of my client, Colonel Pelham, to endeavor to reach a basis of settlement with you, madam, concerning the matter we have been corresponding about," blandly

remarked Mr. Macbean.

"So I supposed," said Elizabeth icily. Mr. Macbean continued, still blandly: "I may recall to you that you have persistently refused to answer my letters or to refer me to a lawyer, and as the affair involves jewels of considerable value I thought myself justified in coming to America to seek a settlement of the matter. May I inquire if you will now give me the name of your lawyer? For it would be far more to your interests—I may say it is necessary to your interests—that this mat-

ter shall be settled promptly."

These words were of vague but dreadful import to Elizabeth. She remained silent. She knew nothing of law or lawyers, and the mere thought of consulting a lawyer seemed to her to be giving away her case. There was one-yes-Richard Baskerville-the only lawyer she knew in Washington, if she might still be said to know him. She recalled having seen him twice since her return to Washington. But she had known him well in the old days. He seemed to have retained his old kindness to her; she might consult him. All this passed rapidly through her mind. What she said was in a calm voice:

"I think I need not consult any lawyer on the point of retaining my husband's gift. The pendant to the necklace was my husband's wedding present to me." Mr. Macbean sighed patiently. He had had many dealings with lady clients, and all of them were like this, quite haughty and impossible, until they were frightened; then they would do anything that was asked of them. The only thing left, then, was to frighten Mrs. Darrell, and to give her to understand that the rights of property were the most sacred rights on earth—from the Scotch point of view.

"I think, madam, if you will kindly consent to see your solicitor—or, I believe you use the generic term in the States—your lawyer—and will afterward have him kindly accord me an interview, you will change your mind upon this matter. The necklace, without counting the additions made to it by your husband, or the pendant, which I understand is of no great value, all of which will be restored to you, is worth at least fifteen hundred pounds. Such a piece of property is not to be disposed of lightly."

So, then, being driven into a corner, helpless and alone, Elizabeth falteringly consented to consult a lawyer. Mr. Macbean left as his address a secondclass hotel, and bowed himself out, promising to repeat his call as soon as

he was permitted.

Had the Scotch solicitor known it, he had done more toward driving Elizabeth toward marrying Clavering than any of Clavering's offers, vows, urgings and inducements. As she stood, pale and frightened, with a wildly beating heart, her eyes fell involuntarily on the

superb house opposite to her.

At that moment Clavering dashed up in a magnificent automobile, and got out. Elizabeth noticed involuntarily that he did not walk with his usually graceful and springy step, and that he leaned against one of the stone pillars of the doorway, before the ever-ready gorgeously caparisoned flunky opened the entrance door. In truth, James Clavering had in his breast pocket a type written document which acted like a drag upon his footsteps and a weight upon his shoulders.

The next moment Elise and Lydia drove up in a gem of a victoria. They

were enveloped in the costliest furs, and so were the immaculate coachman and footman. The pair of perfectly matched bay cobs were worth a fortune. The harness was gold-mounted, with the Clavering initials upon it. As the two girls got out of the victoria Elizabeth caught the gleam of a long chain dotted with diamonds around Élise's neck. Both of them seemed to radiate wealth—and there stood she, forlorn and despairing, for the lack of a few

hundred pounds!

Nor was this all: Even if the value of the necklace could be raised by her father sacrificing everything he had -his interest in his mortgaged house -what might not be done to her because she could not produce the necklace itself? Clavering had told her that with money enough it could easily be traced and recovered; but that would mean more money still-and she might as well ask for a star as for any more than the small sum her father could raise. And when she thought that by saving one word she could step from this unstable, bitter and humiliating position into the very acme of luxury and all the ease of mind which money could give, it seemed to her almost a paradise. It was well for her that Clavering was not on the spot at that moment.

She went back to her father's bedside and to reading the book she had laid down. She uttered the words, but her mind was afar off. As she dwelt upon Mr. Macbean's phrases and thinly disguised threats she grew more and more panic-stricken. At last Serena brought up General Brandon's dinner, and Elizabeth went down to her own solitary meal in the dingy dining-room. Action was forced upon her; she must see a lawyer, and Richard Baskerville was her only choice. She must try to see him that very night. As she knew he would not be at the Claverings' she thought her chance for finding him at home was

excellent.

When dinner was over Elizabeth gave Serena a note to take to Richard Baskerville, asking him to call that evening to see her upon a matter of pressing importance. She put her request upon the ground of old acquaintance, coupled with present necessity. Serena returned within a half hour, with a note from Baskerville saying he would be pleased to call to see Mrs. Darrell that evening at nine o'clock.

General Brandon having been made comfortable for the night, Elizabeth descended to the drawing-room. The gas was lighted, but turned low. Elizabeth went to the window, whence she could see the Clavering house blazing with light and an army of liveried servants moving to and fro. A fraction of the cost of that one entertainment would have made her a free

woman.

Shortly after nine o'clock Baskerville arrived. Like Elizabeth, he gazed with interest at the Clavering house. It was undoubtedly the last great entertainment there at which Anne would preside, and Baskerville had a conviction that it was the last entertainment the Claverings would ever give in Washington. He had private information that the committee of investigation had agreed upon its report, and he believed it would deal severely with Clavering.

He had been surprised to receive Elizabeth's note, but he recognized at once that she was in great trouble, and he had come willingly, as a gentleman should. When he saw Elizabeth he realized how great was her trouble.

Then, sitting in the dimly lighted drawing-room, Elizabeth, with many pauses and palpitations and hesita-

tions, began her story.

Baskerville gently assisted her, and the telling of the first part was not so hard. When it came to the further history of it Elizabeth faltered, and asked anxiously:

"But wasn't the necklace mine entirely, after my husband gave it to

me?"

Baskerville shook his head.

"I'm afraid not, Mrs. Darrell, and I am afraid that Major Darrell made a mistake—a perfectly natural and

excusable mistake—in thinking it was his to give to you in perpetuity. Of course I am not so well informed on these points as an English lawyer would be, but from what you tell me of the other jewels, and the course of the solicitor concerning them, I cannot but think that he knows what he is doing, and that you will have to give up the necklace, retaining, of course, your pendant, and perhaps the stones your husband bought."

Elizabeth looked at him with wild, scared eyes; and then, bursting into tears, told him the whole story of pawning the necklace, of finding it gone, and her unwillingness to own

what she had done.

Baskerville was startled, but allowed her to weep on, without trying to check her. He saw that she was in a state of trembling excitement, excessive even under the circumstances, and she must have her tears out. She had, so far, avoided mentioning Pelham's name.

"But what of the heirs of Major Darrell? Surely, when they know how you were straitened in London after your husband's death, and the good faith in which you pledged the necklace, they would not wish to distress you unnecessarily about it."

Then Elizabeth was forced to speak

of Pelham.

"Major Darrell's heir is his cousin, Colonel Hugh Pelham—the man, next my husband and my father, whom I thought my truest friend. He is in West Africa now-or was, when my husband died-and I have not heard of his return to England since. But he has countenanced all this, and seems to delight in persecuting me, through this man Macbean. And it is quite useless, too, as I have no means of paying the money. I have only a small income—about a hundred pounds a year. But if my father knew of it as he eventually must if this persecution is kept up-he will certainly sell this house—his only piece of property, and mortgaged at that— Oh, I didn't think a man could be so cruel as Hugh Pelham has been!"

"Does Macbean claim to be acting under Colonel Pelham's instructions?"

"Yes. In everything he writes me or says to me he uses Hugh Pelham's

name."

"There is but one thing to do, Mrs. Darrell. I shall see Macbean tomorrow, and endeavor to see what I can do with him. If I fail with him I shall appeal to Colonel Pelham."

"Oh, not that-not that!"

She spoke with so much of feeling, of anger, of mortification in her voice that Baskerville could not but suspect that there was something more concerning Pelham which Elizabeth had not chosen to tell him; but his duty to her as a friend and a lawyer remained the same.

"Pardon me," he said kindly, "but I think it almost necessary to inform Colonel Pelham of the state of the case. I should not, however, do it unless you consent. But I think you will con-

sent."

Elizabeth grew more composed, and they talked some time longer—talked until the rolling of carriages began under the porte-cochère of the Clavering house and women, wrapped in gorgeous ball cloaks and trailing behind them rich brocades and velvets and sparkling chiffons, began to pour through the great entrance doors into the regions of light and splendor beyond. The rhythmic swell of music began to be heard—the great festivity had begun.

Both Elizabeth and Baskerville, sitting in the quiet room only a stone's throw away, were thinking about what was going on in the great mansion across the street. Elizabeth was asking herself if, after all, there were any alternative left her but to agree to marry Clavering. One word and all her troubles and perplexities about money, which had spoiled her life from the time of her girlhood, would disappear. And if she did not marry Clavering—here her dread and apprehension became so strong that she was sickened at the contemplation.

In spite of her preoccupation with her own troubles she could not but regard Baskerville with interest, knowing of his relations with Anne Clavering. Here was another man, like Pelham, who seemed the very mirror of manly love and courage; but perhaps he would be no better than Pelham in the long run. He might marry Anne under an impulse of generous feeling and live to repent it. Elizabeth was becoming a skeptic on the subject of

man's love.

Baskerville had no suspicion that Elizabeth Darrell knew anything of his relations with Anne Clavering, nor did he connect Clavering in any way with Elizabeth. He was thinking of Anne while talking to Elizabeth, remembering how she had disliked and dreaded this great function. She was to do the honors of the occasion, Mrs. Clavering being still ailing. The town had been ringing with the coming magnificence of the festivity, but Anne had been so averse to it that Baskerville had said little to her about it. It was out of the question that he should go, and so no card had been sent him; and he agreed fully with Anne that the affair was most unfortunately conspicuous at the present time.

A silence had fallen between Baskerville and Elizabeth, while listening to
the commotion outside. A sudden
wild impulse came to Elizabeth to tell
Baskerville, of all men, her struggles
about consenting to marry Clavering
without mentioning any name. Baskerville had been kind and helpful to
her; he had come to her immediately
at her request; and before she knew
it she was saying to him, in a nervous

voice:

"I could be free from all these anxieties about money—my father could end his days in ease—all, all, if I would but marry a divorced man—a man to be divorced, that is. And after all, he never was actually married—it was a mistake—"

. Baskerville had been looking abstractedly out of the window at the carriages flashing past, but at this he turned quickly to Elizabeth.

"You mean Senator Clavering?"
Elizabeth sat dumb. She had

yielded to a mad impulse, and would have given a year of her life to have unsaid those words. Baskerville hesitated for a minute or two, and then rose. Elizabeth's silence, the painful flushing of her face, her whole attitude of conscious guilt, proclaimed the truth of Baskerville's surmise. He looked at her in pity and commiseration. She had just told him enough to make him understand how great the temptation was to her; and yet so far she had not yielded. But that she would yield he had not the least doubt. And what untold miseries would not she, or any woman like her, bring upon herself by marrying Clavering!

It was a question which neither one of them could discuss, and Basker-

ville's only words were:

"I have no right to offer you my advice, except on the point upon which you consulted me; but I beg of you to consider well what you are thinking of; you are hovering over dreadful possibilities for yourself. Good night."

He was going, but Elizabeth ran and

grasped his arm.

"You won't speak of this to Miss Clavering—you must not do it—you

have no right!"

Baskerville smiled rather bitterly—whether Elizabeth were afraid or ashamed he did not know—probably both.

"Certainly I shall not," he said, and to Elizabeth's ears his tone expressed

the most entire contempt.

"And I haven't promised him—I haven't agreed yet," she added, tears coming into her eyes—and then Bas-

kerville was gone.

Elizabeth sat, stunned by her own folly, and burning with shame at the scorn she fancied Baskerville had felt for her. He had been kind to her, and had agreed to do all that was possible with Macbean, but by her own act she had lost his good will and respect. Well, it was a part of the web of destiny. She was being driven to marry Clavering by every circumstance of her life—even this last. Pelham's unkindness was the beginning of it; Macbean's persecution helped it on; Gen-

eral Brandon's goodness and generosity, Baskerville's contempt for her—all urged her on; she supposed Baskerville would probably have nothing more to do with her affairs, and would leave her to face Macbean alone; and that would be the end of her resistance

to Clavering.

She went up to her own room, and with a shawl huddled around her sat by the window in the dark, looking out upon the splendid scene of a great ball in a capital city. Elizabeth in the cold and darkness watched it allwatched until the ambassadors' carriages were called, followed rapidly by the other equipages which were packed in the surrounding streets for blocks. At last, after three o'clock in the morning, the trampling of horses' hoofs, the closing of carriage doors and the commotion of footmen and coachmen ceased—the great affair was over. Quickly, as in the transformation scene at a theatre, the splendid house grew dark-all except the windows of Clavering's library. They remained brilliantly lighted, long after all else in the street was dark and quiet.

Elizabeth, for some reason inexplicable to herself, remained still at her window, looking at the blaze of light from Clavering's library windows. What was keeping him up so late? Was it good news or bad? Had the report of the committee been made?

Within the library sat Clavering in his accustomed chair. In his hand he held a typewritten document of many pages, which had cost him many thousands of dollars to have purloined and copied from another one which was locked up in the safe of the secretary of the Senate. Every page of this document proclaimed in some form his guilt, and at the bottom was written in the hand of a man he knew well, and who had stolen and copied the report for him:

Resolution of expulsion will be introduced immediately after reading of report, and will pass by three-fourth majority.

And the hired thief had not played fair with him. He had discovered that at least three newspapers had bought the stolen report, and at that very moment he knew the great presses in the newspaper offices were clanging with the story of his disgrace to be printed on the morrow.

Then there was a bunch of telegrams from his State capital. If the Senate did not vote to expel, the Legislature would request him to resign—so there was no vindication there.

To this, then, had his public career come! Clavering was not honest himself, nor did he believe in honesty in others; but he believed it possible that he might have been more secret in his evil-doing. He had thought that with money, brains and courage he could brazen anything out. But behold! he could not. He was fairly caught and exposed. Those stray words of Baskerville's uttered some months before recurred to him: "There is no real

substitute for honesty." He had heard the news on his way home that afternoon, from an out-oftown expedition. It had unnerved him for a little while; it was that which made him get out of the automobile so heavily when Elizabeth, unseen, was watching him. He had gone through the evening, however, bravely, and even cynically. Many senators had been asked to the great function; scarcely half a dozen had appeared, and all of them were inconsiderable men, dragged there by their womenkind. In the course of some hours of reflection-for Clavering could think in a crowd-a part of his indomitable courage and resource had returned. He had no fear of the criminal prosecutions which would certainly follow. William M. Tweed had been caught, but Tweed was a mere vulgar villain, and did not know when he was beaten. Clavering rapidly made up his mind that he could afford to restore eight or even ten millions of dollars to the rightful owners, and that would satisfy them; they wouldn't be likely to spend any part of it in trying to punish him.

As for any part the State and Federal Government might take he was not particularly concerned. The party had

done enough to clear its skirts by expelling him from the Senate, and if he satisfied all the claims against him nobody would have any object in entering upon a long, expensive and doubtful trial. But after paying out even ten millions of dollars he would have twice as much left, which nobody and no government could get, though it was as dishonestly made as the rest. With that much money and Elizabeth Darrell—for Elizabeth entered into all his calculations—life would still be

worth living.

When the mob of gaily dressed people were gone, when the laughter and the dancing and the music and the champagne and the feasting were over, and Clavering sat in his library alone under the brilliant chandelier, he grew positively cheerful. He was not really fond of public life, and although he would have liked to get out of it more gracefully, he was not really sorry to go. He had found himself bound in a thousand conventions since he had been in Washington; he had been hampered by his family; by his wife because she was old and stupid and ignorant, by Elise and Lydia because they were so bad, by Anne and Reginald because they were so honest. It would be rather good to be free once more—free in the great, wide, untamed West, free in the vast, populous, surging cities of Europe. He would have Elizabeth with him-he did not much care for anyone else's society. She had never heard him admit his guilt, and he could easily persuade her that he was the victim of untoward circumstance

While he was thinking these things he heard a commotion overhead. Presently the whole house was roused, and servants were running back and forth. Elizabeth Darrell, still watching at her window, saw the sudden and alarming awakening of the silent house. Mrs. Clavering had been taken violently ill. Before sunrise the poor lady was no longer in anyone's way. A few hours of stupor, a little awakening at the last, a clinging to Anne and Reginald and telling them to be good, and

Mrs. Clavering's gentle spirit was free and in peace.

When the undertaker was hanging the streamers of black upon the doorbell the morning newspaper was laid on the steps. On the first page, with great headlines, was the announcement that Senator Clavering had been found guilty of all the charges against him and that expulsion from the Senate was certain to follow. The newspaper omitted to state how the information was obtained.

X

The morning of Ash Wednesday dawned cold and damp and cheerless. Baskerville had heard a rumor at the club the night before that there had been a leak between the committeeroom and the office of the secretary of the Senate; that the committee report had been copied and would be published in the morning. So he had the morning newspaper brought up to him. On the first page, with a huge display head, was printed the report in full, together with the recommendation of expulsion against Senator Clavering.

Baskerville immediately wrote a note to Anne Clavering asking that their engagement might be announced and also suggesting an immediate marriage. Within an hour came back an answer from Anne. In a few agitated lines she told of her mother's death. She did not ask Baskerville to come to her, but he, seeing that it was no time for small conventions, replied at once, saying that he would be at her house at twelve o'clock, and begged that she would see him.

Elizabeth Darrell was the first person outside of Clavering's family who knew that he was a free man. There had been no time to get a doctor for Mrs. Clavering, although several had been called. But when they arrived all was over. Elizabeth had seen the sudden shutting of the windows; she knew, almost to a moment, when Mrs. Clavering died.

At seven o'clock in the morning Serena, with that morbid desire to com-

municate tragic news which is the characteristic of the African, came up to Elizabeth's room full of what she had gleaned from the neighboring servants. Elizabeth listened and felt a sense of guiltenveloping her. Then, when General Brandon was dressed, he came up to her door to discuss the startling news, and his was the first card left for the Clavering family. On it the good soul had written:

With heartfelt sympathy in the overwhelming sorrow which has befallen Senator Clavering and his family.

Elizabeth remained indoors all that day. She drew her window curtains together, so that she could not see the house which might have been hers, where had lived the dead woman of whom she had considered the spoliation.

At twelve o'clock Baskerville came and was promptly admitted into the Clavering house. There had been no time to remove the festal decorations. The Moorish hall was odorous with flowers, the mantels and even the handrail of the staircase being banked with them. Masses of tall palms made a mysterious green light through the whole of the great suite of rooms. The ceilings were draped with greenery, and orchids and roses hung from them. The huge ballroom was just as the dancers had left it, and everywhere were flowers, palms and burnt-out candles on girandoles and candelabra. The servants, in gorgeous liveries, sat about, more asleep than awake, and over all was that solemn silence which accompanies the presence of that first and greatest of democrats Death.

Baskerville was shown into a little morning-room on the second floor, which had belonged to the poor dead woman. It was very simply furnished and in many ways suggested Mrs. Clavering. Baskerville, remembering her untoward fate in being thrust into a position for which she was unfitted, and her genuine goodness and gentleness, felt a real regret at her death. Being a generous man, he had taken pleasure in the intention of being kind

to Mrs. Clavering; he knew that it would add extremely to Anne's happiness—but, like much other designed good, it was too late. He remembered with satisfaction the little courtesies he had been able to show Mrs. Clavering and Anne's gratitude for them; and then, before he knew it, Anne, in her black gown, pale and heavy-eyed, was sobbing in his arms.

She soon became composed, and told him calmly of the last days. She dwelt with comfort upon her last conversations with her mother about Baskerville, and the message she had sent him.

"My mother had not been any too well treated in this life," added Anne, the smoldering resentment in her heart showing in her eyes, "and you are almost the only man of your class who ever seemed to recognize her beautiful qualities—for my mother had beautiful qualities."

"I know it," replied Baskerville, with perfect sincerity, "and I tried to show my appreciation of them."

It was plain to Baskerville after spending some time with Anne that she knew nothing of the news concerning her father with which all Washington was ringing. Baskerville felt that it would never do for her to hear it by idle gossip or by chance. So, after awhile he told her—told her with all the gentleness, all the tenderness at his command, softening it so far as he could. Anne listened, tearless and dry-eyed. She followed him fairly well, and asked at last:

"Do you mean that—that—my father will be expelled from the Senate, and then—there will be no more trouble?"

"Dearest, I wish I could say so. But there will be a great deal more of trouble, I am afraid—enough to make it necessary that you and I should be married as soon as possible."

"And you would marry the daughter of a man so disgraced—who may end his days in a prison?"

"Yes-since it is you."

He then inquired her plans for the present. Mrs. Clavering's body was to

be taken for burial to her old home in Iowa.

Baskerville asked, or rather demanded, that within a month Anne should be prepared to become his wife.

"And haven't you some relations out in Iowa from whose house we can be

married?" he said.

"Yes," replied Anne, "I have aunts and cousins there. I warn you they are very plain people, but they are very respectable. I don't think there is a person in my mother's family of whom I have any reason to be ashamed, although they are, as I tell you, plain people."

"That is of no consequence whatever. I shall wait until after your mother's funeral before writing your father and having our engagement announced, and within a month I shall

come to Iowa to marry you."

And Anne, seeing this sweet refuge open to her, took heart of grace and

comfort.

Clavering himself, sitting in his darkened library, was in no way awed by death having invaded his house. He had been brought face to face with it too often to be afraid of it; he was a genuine, thoroughgoing disbeliever in everything except money and power, and he regarded the end of life as being an interesting but unimportant event.

His wife's death was most opportune for him; it made it certain that Elizabeth Darrell would marry him. He had fully realized that stubborn prejudice against divorce on Elizabeth's part, and although he had not seriously doubted his ability to overcome it, yet it had been stubborn. Now all was smoothed away. He would act with perfect propriety, under the circumstances; he surmised enough about the women of Elizabeth's class to understand that a breach of decorum would shock her far more than a breach of morals. There would be no outward breach of decorum. He would wait until after the funeral before writing her; but it would be useless, hypocritical and even dangerous to postpone it longer.

With these thoughts in his mind he

sat through the day, receiving and answering telegrams, scanning the newspapers, and digesting his own disgrace as exposed in print. Even that had come at a fortunate time for him-if there is a fortunate time to be branded a thief, a liar and a perjurer, a suborner of perjury, a corrupter of courts, a purchaser of legislatures. Elizabeth would feel sorry for him; she wouldn't understand the thing at all. He would insist on being married in the autumn. and Elizabeth would no doubt be glad to be married as far away from Washington as possible. Perhaps she might agree to meet him in London and be married there-he would go over in the summer, take the finest house to be had for money, and transport all the superb equipment of his Washington establishment to London. He also remembered with satisfaction that he had nothing now to fear on the score of divorce from that soft-spoken, wooden-headed, fire-eating old impracticable General Brandon, with his fatal tendency to settle with the pistol questions concerning "the ladies of his family." In these reflections and considerations James Clavering passed the first day of his widowerhood.

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On the third day after Mrs. Clavering's death the great house was shut up and silent. The Claverings left it, never to return to it. It stood vacant, a monument of man's vicissitudes.

The day after Mrs. Clavering's burial took place in the little Iowa town where her family lived a line appeared in the society column of a leading Washington newspaper, announcing the engagement of Anne Clavering and Richard Baskerville.

Coming as it did on the heels of the tragic events in the Clavering family and Baskerville's share in a part of these events, the announcement was startling though far from unexpected. Mrs. Luttrell took upon herself the office of personally acquainting her friends with the engagement and declaring her entire satisfaction with it. Being by nature an offensive partisan, much given to pernicious activity in causes which engaged her heart, Mrs.

Luttrell soon developed into a champion of the whole Clavering family. She discovered many admirable qualities in Clavering himself, and changed her tune completely concerning Elise and Lydia, whom she now spoke of as "a couple of giddy chits, quite harmless, and only a little wild." These two young women had speedily made up their minds to fly to Europe, and arranged to do so as soon as Anne should be married, which was to be within the month.

The catastrophes of the Clavering family made a profound impression on Washington. Their meteoric career was a sort of epitome of all the possibilities of the sudden acquisition of wealth. Whatever might be said of them, they were at least not cowards—not even Reginald Clavering was a coward. They were boldly bad, or boldly good. Anne Clavering had won for herself a place in the esteem of society which was of great value. Not one disrespectful or unkind word was spoken of her when the day of reckoning for the Claverings came.

The Senate allowed James Clavering two weeks to recover from his grief at his wife's death before annihilating him as a senator. Clavering improved the time not only by arranging for his second marriage, but by forestalling, when he had no fighting ground, the criminal indictments which might be expected to be found against him. He paid out secretly in satisfaction-money, and reconveyed in bonds, nearly three millions of dollars. There were several millions more to be fought over, but that was a matter of time, and he would still have a great fortune remaining, if every suit went against him.

It would very much have simplified his property arrangements had Elizabeth Darrell consented to marry him within a few weeks of his widowerhood. But this Clavering knew was not to be thought of.

A week after his wife's death he wrote to Elizabeth. He quietly assumed that all the arrangements had been made for their marriage, as soon as he should have got his divorce.

In his letter he reminded Elizabeth there could be now no question or scruple in regard to her marrying him. He told her he would be in Washington at the end of a week, when the proceedings in the Senate would take place, and that he should expect to see her. He asked her to write and let him know where they should meet.

Elizabeth realized that she had gone too far to refuse Clavering a meeting, nor, in fact, did she desire to avoid him. Her feelings toward him had become more and more chaotic; they did not remain the same for an hour together. She felt that a powerful blow had been dealt her objection to marrying him in the removal of the divorce question; she doubted in her heart whether she ever could have been brought to the point of marrying him had his wife not died.

And then there had been another interview with Macbean. He had told Elizabeth he was about to leave Washington to be absent a month, as he was combining pleasure with business on his visit to America, but that on his return, if the necklace were not forthcoming, he should begin legal proceedings immediately. Mr. Macbean was fully persuaded, while he was talking to Elizabeth, that the necklace was around her neck under her high gown, or in her pocket, or in a secret drawer of her writing-desk-in any one of those strange places where women keep their valuables. Elizabeth, in truth, did not know whether the necklace was in America, Europe, Asia, Africa or Australia.

Then Baskerville, in spite of the crisis in his own affairs, had not neglected Elizabeth. He had managed to see Macbean, and had discovered that the solicitor was perfectly justified in all he had done, from the legal point of view. When Baskerville came to inquire how far Colonel Pelham was responsible for what was done he was met by an icy reticence on Mr. Macbean's part, who replied that Baskerville was asking unprofessional questions, and in embarrassment Baskerville desisted. It be-

came clear, however, and Baskerville so wrote to Elizabeth, that her concealment of the pawning of the necklace, and her inability to pay back the money she raised on it, were very serious matters, and she should at once lay the matter before her father.

Elizabeth, however, had not been able to bring herself to that. She thought of all sorts of wild alternatives, such as asking Clavering to lend her the money; but her soul recoiled from them. She even considered writing a letter to Hugh Pelham; but at that, too, her heart cried aloud in protest. She did not know where Pelham was, but surmised that he was still in West Africa. A letter addressed to the War Office would reach

him-but when?

Clavering had reckoned upon Elizabeth's neither knowing nor appreciating the effect of the revelations about him; in this, however, he was mistaken. She had read the newspapers diligently, and understood his affairs far better than Clavering dreamed. The case had made a tremendous sensation. The tragic circumstances of the catastrophe, the probable action of the Senate which was known in advance, the far reaching scandals which would result from the making public of the findings, all combined to give the country a profound shock—a shock so profound that it was known it would seriously jeopardize for the party in power the States in which Clavering and his gang had operated.

Among public men in Washington the feeling was intense. The senators who from a combination of honesty and policy had advocated going to the bottom of the scandals and punishing everybody found guilty, were in the position of doctors who have successfully performed a hazardous operation. but are uncertain whether the patient will survive or not. There was no doubt that many criminal prosecutions would follow, but there was a general belief that Clavering was too able and resourceful a man, and had too much money, to be actually punished for the crimes he had undoubtedly committed. His real punishment was his expulsion from the Senate.

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Elizabeth Darrell knew all these things, and turned them over in her mind until she was half distracted. Another thing, small to a man but large to a woman, tormented her. She must meet Clavering-but where? Not in her father's house; that could only be done secretly, and she could not stoop to deceive her father. The only way she could think of was in the little park, far at the other end of the town, where their first momentous meeting had taken place. So, feeling the humiliation of what she was doing. Elizabeth replied to Clavering's letter. and named a day—the day before the one set for the final proceedings in the Senate—when she would see him, and she named six o'clock in the afternoon. in the little out of the way park.

It was March then of a forward spring. The day had been one of those sudden warm and balmy days which come upon Washington at the most unlikely seasons. Already the grass was green and the miles upon miles of shade trees were full of sap and the buds were near to bursting. Six o'clock was not quite dusk, but it was as late as Elizabeth dared to make her appointment. Her heart was heavy as she walked along the quiet, unfamiliar streets toward the park-as heavy as on that day, only a few months before, when she had returned to Washington after her widowhood. she had been oppressed with the thought that life was over for hernothing interesting would ever again happen to her. And what had not happened to her!

When Elizabeth reached the park she found Clavering awaiting her. He could not but note the grace of her walk and the beauty of her figure as she approached him. She was one of those women who become more interesting, if less handsome, under the stress of feeling. Her dark eyes were appealing, and she sank rather than sat upon the park bench to which Clavering

escorted her.

"You seem to have taken my troubles to heart," he said, with the air and manner of an accepted lover.

Elizabeth made no reply. She had not been able to discover, in the chaos of her emotions, how far Clavering's

troubles really touched her.

"However," said Clavering, "the worst will be over tomorrow. I wish you could be in the Senate gallery, to see how I bear it. The vote on expulsion takes place tomorrow, directly after the morning hour, and I know precisely the majority against me—it will be quite enough to do the work."

Then he added, with a cool smile: "I believe if you could be present you would realize what a pack of rascals have sacrificed me to political expediency! Unluckily I can't offer you a seat in the senators' gallery, as I might have done a short while ago. The fools think I will stay away, but I shall be in my seat, and from it I shall make my defense and my promise to return to the Senate by the mandate of my State. It will sound well, but to tell you the truth I have no more wish to return than the Legislature has the intention of returning me. I have pleasanter things in view—it is life with you."

Elizabeth, beguiled in spite of herself as women are by courage, glanced at Clavering. Yes, he was not afraid of any man or of anything, while she was consumed with terror over a paltry five hundred pounds and the loss of a necklace worth only a trifle in Clavering's eyes. She longed that he would break through her prohibition and speak about the necklace. But Clavering did not, and never intended to do so. He knew very well that Elizabeth's necessities were his best advocates, and he did not purpose silenc-

ing any of them.

Elizabeth's reply, after a pause, to Clavering's remark was:

"I shouldn't like to see you tomorrow. It will be too tragic."

"It is a pity that I am not divorced instead of being so recent a widower," Clavering replied. "Then you could marry me at the moment of misfortune—as Richard Baskerville proposes to marry my daughter Anne. It would be a great help to me now, if it were possible. As it is, we shall have to postpone our marriage until the autumn."

"No," replied Elizabeth decisively;

"it cannot be until next year."

Clavering's eyes flashed. It was the first time she had ever fully admitted that she meant to marry him, although he had from the beginning assumed it. He had very little doubt that he could induce her to shorten the time of wait-

ng

"We will talk about that later. Meanwhile I suppose you will stay here with your father. We can't enjoy the London house this season, but I shall go abroad in June. I shall have straightened things out by that time, and I can select a house. It will be as good a one as that which I have lived in here. I can ship all the furnishings, pictures and plate, with the horses and carriages, to London in advance, and have your establishment ready for you when you arrive. Perhaps it would be better for us to be married in London."

Elizabeth Darrell was not what is called a mercenary woman; she had hesitated when offered vast wealth, and had even declined it on the terms first offered to her, nor did she believe that she would ever have agreed to marry Clavering, in the event of his divorce, but for the removal of her scruples of conscience on finding that his first marriage was illegal. But these words of Clavering's about the London establishment brought to mind her former life there. She made a rapid mental comparison of Clavering with poor, honest, brave, stupid, dead Jack Darrell; with Pelham, as he had been; with her father; and the comparison staggered and revolted her. If it were written, however, in the book of destiny that she should marry Clavering it were better that they should be married in London, as he suggested. She would rather escape her father's eye when that transaction took placeand nobody else in the world cared how or when she was married, or what

might become of her.

Clavering spent the time of their interview in planning their future life together. He offered her luxury in every form, but he was too astute a man to make his purchase of her too obvious. He by no means left out his love for her, which was in truth the master passion of his life just then. But he did not force it upon Elizabeth, seeing that she was as yet restless and but half tamed to his hand. Elizabeth listened to him, with the conviction growing in her mind that she must marry this man.

Their conversation lasted barely half an hour. Clavering urged Elizabeth to meet him again before he left Washington, which would be the next night, at midnight; but to this Elizabeth would not agree. Clavering saw that he must wait at least six months before she would tolerate any attentions from him, and he quickly made up his mind that it was best not to urge her too much now. He had practically received her promise to marry him at the end of a year, and considering the obstacles he had to contend with he felt pretty well satisfied.

As on the former occasion when they had met in the little park, Clavering went after a cab for Elizabeth, put her

in it and they separated.

Elizabeth spent a solitary evening. The calm which reigned in Clavering's breast was by no means her portion. She felt that she had finally committed herself to marry him, and the prospect frightened her. She recalled Baskerville's words—the "dreadful possibilities" which might await a woman married to Clavering. Their contemplation frightened her more than ever. She was so absorbed in her own troubles that she scarcely gave a thought to Clavering's impending fate on the morrow.

She remained up late, and the clock had struck midnight before her light was out. Once in bed Elizabeth was seized with a maddening restlessness against which she fought for four hours. When the sky of night was wan and pale with the coming dawn she rose, and going to her writing table began to write steadily. Her letter was to

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Hugh Pelham.

She told him everything, without concealment—the story of the need that made her pawn the necklace, the story of Clavering, the story of her life in Washington, of her grief and amazement at what seemed to be Pelham's persecution of her, and it closed with a torrent of reproaches that came from

the depths of her heart.

She sealed it and addressed it to Pelham in the care of the War Office at London. She had no idea where Pelham was or when the letter would reach him; but some time or other he would get it, and then he would know how cruel his conduct was and how farreaching was the effect of his ill treatment of her. She had glossed over nothing about Clavering; she had painted him in his true colors, and she had told Pelham that but for him there would have been no temptation for her to have married such a man as Clavering.

When she had finished and sealed and stamped her letter, Elizabeth went to the window and drew the curtain. The flush that precedes the dawn was over the opaline sky; it was the beginning of an exquisite spring day. city lay still and quiet; only one footfall was heard—that of the postman collecting the letters from the mailbox at the corner. As he passed briskly along the street under Elizabeth's window a letter softly fluttered down and fell at his feet. He glanced up and saw a window high above him being closed. He picked up the letter and put it in his bag and went on, whistling.

Elizabeth, up in her bedroom, threw herself upon her bed and sank into a heavy and dreamless sleep that lasted until Serena knocked at her door at nine o'clock. Elizabeth rose, dressed and breakfasted like a person in a dream. She remembered her letter instantly, and the recollection of it made her uneasy. Gradually her uneasiness turned to an agony of regret. She

would have given ten years of her life to have recalled the letter; but she supposed it was now impossible.

Her great concern made her forget all about Clavering's impending doom that day, until quite noon. As she began to consider it the spirit of restlessness which seemed to possess her impelled her to wish that she could witness the scene in the Senate chamber. It might take her mind from her letter. which burned in her memory and was eating her heart out with shame and unavailing repentance. She knew there would be vast crowds at the Capitol, but she felt sure that not one of her few acquaintances in Washington would be there. About one o'clock she suddenly resolved to go to the Capitol. Covering her face, as well as her hat, with a thick black veil, she started for the white-domed building on the hill.

When she reached the plaza she found a great crowd surrounding the north wing. Not in the memory of man had such an event as the expulsion of a senator occurred, and it was the very thing to stimulate the unhealthy curiosity of thousands. A steady stream poured into the doorways and jammed the corridors. Elizabeth doubted whether she would ever get nearer than the Senate corridor, much less be able to get into the small public gallery. She noticed, however, that the multitude was pouring into the ground floor entrance, so she determined to mount the long, wide flight of steps on the east front and enter the rotunda through the great bronze doors.

It was a beautiful spring day and the crowd was a well-dressed and cheerful one. Nobody would have dreamed that they were about to attend a great public tragedy.

As Elizabeth reached the top of the flight she turned involuntarily to look at the beautiful panorama outspread before her in the Southern sunshine. Fair and faintly green lay the park-like gardens around the Capitol, while the golden dome of the National Library flashed and gleamed in the noonday

radiance. Never before had she thought Washington a joyous-looking city, but today, with sunshine and life and motion, with this animated throng of persons, this continual passing to and fro, it reminded her of Paris on a fete day.

While Elizabeth was looking upon the charming scene outspread before her she heard the trampling of hoofs and the roll of a carriage below her. Clavering, in his handsomest brougham. with a superb pair of horses, had just driven up. The coachman and footman wore the newest, smartest and blackest of mourning liveries for the mistress they had seen ignored, when not insulted, during the whole term of their service. Forth from the carriage. a cynosure for the staring, curious crowd, stepped Clavering. He, too, was dressed in new and immaculate mourning, with a crape-covered hat.

Elizabeth shrank behind one of the huge pillars, but from it she saw Clavering's dignified and ever graceful air as he braved the glances of the multitude. The lower entrance being jammed with people, he leisurely mounted the great flight of steps—a thing he had never done in all his senatorial service.

The crowd watched him with admiration and gratitude—it gave them the more time and the better opportunity of seeing him. He passed close enough to Elizabeth to have touched her, as she stood quaking with shame and fear; but, looking neither to the right nor the left, he walked on, calm, courageous and apparently at ease with himself and all the world.

Elizabeth, still moved by an impulse stronger than her will, pressed forward through the rotunda into the corridors. They were packed, and the doors to the public galleries had long been closed. Elizabeth found herself in the midst of a surging crowd, in the corridor leading to the reserved gallery—the place in which Clavering had told her he could no longer admit her. While she was standing there, crushed on either side, a pathway was opened, and a party of senators' wives approached

the door. At the same moment it was opened and some people came out. In the slight confusion several tried to get in; the doorkeepers, trying to separate the sheep from the goats, pushed the intruders back and pushed Elizabeth in with the senatorial party.

"But I have no right in here," she said hurriedly to the doorkeeper who

shoved her into the gallery.

"Just go in, madam, and let me shut these people out," replied the doorkeeper, seeing the necessity for closing the door at once. So Elizabeth found herself in the last place either she or Clavering expected her to be—in the gallery set apart for the senatorial families.

It was then almost two o'clock, when the morning hour expired, and the first business to be taken up was the resolution of expulsion against Senator Clavering. There was a subdued tremor over the whole scene; the senators who were to do a great act of public justice upon one of their own number were deeply moved over it. Not one of them had ever before taken part in such proceedings, and the species of civil death they were about to inflict on a man once counted worthy to sit among them was in some respects worse than the death of the body. The seriousness of the occasion affected everyone present; a psychic wave of shame, regret and solemnity swept over the whole assemblage, and a strange stillness reigned among the people who filled the galleries. Nearly every senator was in his seat, and the space back of them was crowded with members of the other House and persons who had the privileges of the floor.

Clavering sat in his accustomed place, a cool and apparently disinterested observer of the proceedings. His presence was highly disconcerting to the committee which had prepared the report, and indeed to every senator present. It had been hoped that Clavering would absent himself; there were no precedents in the present generation for such proceedings, and it would have been altogether easier if Clavering had chosen to remain away.

But, as he was a senator up to the moment the vote was taken, no one

could say him nay.

Elizabeth found no trouble in concealing herself behind the large hats and feathers of the ladies in the reserved gallery, and she could observe Clavering closely. She thought she had never seen him look so handsome and even distinguished in appearance. Had he only been honest! Some thoughts like these raced through Clavering's brain. He recalled Baskerville's remark, "There is no real substitute for honesty," and he remembered several occasions when he could have afforded to be honest and had not been -and he regretted it. Most of all, he regretted not having taken greater precautions when he was dishonest.

At last, the morning hour having expired, the next business on the calendar was the reading of the report of the committee of investigation on the affairs of the K. F. R. land grants, and the corporations connected therewith. The Vice-President, looking pale and worried, recognized the chairman of the committee, who looked paler and more worried. The stillness resolved itself into a death-like silence, broken only by the resonant tones of

the reading clerk.

It was not a long report—the reading of it lasted scarcely three-quarters of an hour; but it was a terrible one. As the charges were named and declared proved, a kind of horror appeared to settle down upon the Senate chamber. The senators who had been lukewarm in the matter were shamed for themselves; those who had been charged with the execution of justice were shamed for the cause of popular government. If such things were possible in a government by the people and for the people and of the people, it was an indictment against the whole people.

During it all Clavering sat with unshaken calmness. Not by a glance out of his handsome, stern eyes nor the least variation of color in his clear and ruddy complexion did he indicate the smallest agitation. Not even the last clause, which recommended his expulsion from the Senate of the United States, and which every member of the committee signed, without a dissenting voice, had the power to move him from his cool composure.

When the reading was concluded the chairman of the committee rose and made a few explanations of the report. He spoke in an agitated and broken voice. Before introducing the resolution of expulsion, he hesitated and looked toward Clavering. Clavering rose, and on being recognized by the Chair, asked to be heard in a brief defense.

Although he had always been a hard worker in his committee-room, Clavering had not often got upon his feet to speak in the Senate chamber. As he had told Elizabeth months before, he always knew his limitations as a debater. Having been used to lording over men for many years, the courteous assumption that every senator is a wise man had never sat well on him. When he spoke he had always been listened to, because he always had something to say; but he had shown his usual good judgment by not measuring himself with the giants of debate. Today, however, he had nothing more to hope or fear from those grave men, whose scorn of him was swallowed up in the execution of justice upon him.

As he rose to speak, to many minds came back that old Homeric line, "As the passing leaves, so is the passing of men." And this man was passing from life into civil death before their

Clavering, in his beautifully clear and well-modulated voice, began his defense, if defense it could be called. He told briefly but impressively of his early struggles, of his lack of education, of the wild life of the West into which he was inducted early, of the disregard of written laws in the administration of the justice with which he was familiar, how the strong men ruled by virtue of their strength, how great enterprises were carried through by forces not understood or even known

in old and settled communities. described the effect of his operations in large sections of country, which made him hosts of friends and hosts of enemies. He subtly called attention by indirection to that unwritten law; voiced by a British general in India, that there were in all partly civilized countries certain necessary and salutary rascalities—to be carried through by the strong and wise against the weak and foolish. Coming down to his own case, he made no appeal for mercy, and offered no plea in abatement. On the contrary, he became distinctly aggressive, and heaped ridicule upon the committee of elderly gentlemen sitting in their luxurious committee-room, passing judgment on the storm and stress of men and things as unknown to them as the inhabitants of another planet.

His conclusion was a ringing defiance of his enemies, a promise of vengeance upon them, and a solemn declaration that he would return, rehabilitated, to the Senate of the United States, and every man who believed him guilty might count himself the everlasting enemy of James Clavering from that day forth.

When he sat down there was from the public galleries an involuntary burst of applause which was instantly suppressed. Two or three women wept aloud; an aged senator attempted to rise from his seat, fell back, and was carried out half fainting. There were a few minutes of nervous quiet and whispering, and then the final proceedings began. They were short and exquisitely painful. The resolution of expulsion was put and received a threefourths vote in its favor. Half a dozen senators in a group voted against the resolution, and a few others were absent or refrained from voting. When the result was declared amid a deathlike silence, Clavering rose and, making a low bow toward the senators who had voted for him, left his seat and went toward the aisle. As he reached it he turned to the Chair and made another bow full of dignity and respect; and then, without the least flurry or discomposure, retired from the Senate chamber which it had been the summit of his lifelong ambition to enter and of which he was never again to cross the threshold. He was to see no more service of the great Demos. But not Alcibiades, when he called the Athenians a pack of dogs, looked more sincerely contemptuous than James Clavering of the United States Senate when, a disgraced and branded man, he walked out of the Senate chamber.

XI

In the first week of April Richard Baskerville and Anne Clavering were married in the little Iowa town where Mrs. Clavering's family lived and where Anne had remained since her mother's death. The wedding took place at Mr. Joshua Hicks's house, one

of the best in the town.

Mr. Hicks was Anne's uncle by marriage, a leading merchant in the place, and a better man or a better citizen could not be found in the State of Iowa. He wore ready-made clothes, weighed out sugar and tea and sold calico by the yard, was a person of considerable wit and intelligence, and had a lofty self-respect which put him at ease in every society. His wife was a younger, better-looking and better educated woman than Mrs. Clavering, and as good as that poor woman had Their sons and daughters were ornaments of the high school, had mapped out careers for themselves, but meantime treated their parents with affectionate deference. In their drawing-room, called a front parlor, furnished in red plush and with chromos on the walls, Anne Clavering became the wife of Richard Baskerville, the descendant of the oldest landed aristocracy in Virginia and Maryland. Clavering himself had said he would be present, but at the last minute telegraphed that he would be unable to come, having been suddenly called to Washington. He sent Anne a handsome cheque as a wedding gift. Elise and Lydia, who had spent the intervening time between their mother's funeral and their sister's marriage in shopping in Chicago and preparing for a precipitate trip to Europe, returned to the little town and remained over a train in order to be present at the wedding. Basker-ville would have been glad if they had been absent. Reginald Clavering gave

his sister away.

It was the plainest and simplest wedding imaginable. The bride wore a white muslin, made by the village dressmaker. The bridegroom arrived on foot from the village tavern, where he had been staying. They began their wedding tour by driving away in the Hicks family surrey to another little country village seven miles off. It was a golden April afternoon, with an aroma of spring in the air, and the fields and orchards echoed with songs of birds-it was their mating-time. Mr. Hicks's hired man, who drove the married lovers to their destination, where they were to spend their honeymoon, declared he had never seen a bride and bridegroom so little spoony. He had, in truth, although he knew it not, never seen a bride and bridegroom who loved each other so much.

Clavering's call to Washington, which prevented him from attending his daughter's wedding, in reality consisted of a few lines from Elizabeth Darrell. After that March day in the Senate chamber Elizabeth fell into a settled listlessness. She felt herself obliged to marry Clavering eventually, as the only way out of an intolerable position; and this listlessness from which she suffered always falls upon those who succumb to what is reckoned as irrevocable fate. The spring was in its full splendor, and the town was beautiful in all its glory of green trees and emerald grass, and great clumps of flowering shrubs and sweet-scented hyacinths and crocuses and tulips. No city in the world has in it so much sylvan beauty as Washington, and in the spring it is a place of enchanting verdure. All this awakening of the spring made Elizabeth Darrell only the more sad, the more dispirited. The old, old feeling came upon her of the dissonance of nature and man—the world beautiful, and man despairing.

Reading, her sole resource, no longer amused her. It was a solace she had tried, and it had failed her; so she read no more, nor thought nor worked, nor did anything but quietly endure.

She affected cheerfulness when she met her father in the afternoons, and General Brandon, whom a child could deceive, thought how improved in spirits she had grown since the autumn. The general's confidence in Clavering continued quite unshaken, and he proclaimed solemnly that no man in public life, since the foundation of the Government, had been so hounded and persecuted as "that high-toned gentleman, sir, ex-Senator Clavering."

Next to the thought of marrying Clavering the most heartbreaking thing to Elizabeth was the memory of the rash letter she had written to Hugh Pelham. The only mitigation of this was that he would not get it for many months—perhaps never. Her cheeks burned at every recollection of it.

The month had passed away at the end of which Macbean had promised to appear, but so far she had heard and seen nothing more of him. She felt sure, however, that Macbean had not forgotten her, and she looked for him daily. Then she must ask Clavering for money—and that would settle her

One soft spring night she sat at the open drawing-room window, looking out on the quiet street, where the great Clavering house loomed dark, silent and deserted. There was no light in the drawing-room where Elizabeth sat, but a gas-jet in the hall cast a flame of yellow radiance in at the doorway. Elizabeth sat in the shadow and the silence. Suddenly a peremptory ring was heard at the bell, and in a minute or two Serena entered the room and handed Elizabeth a white envelope with a telegram in it.

Elizabeth had more than the usual feminine dread of a telegraphic despatch, and she held the envelope in her hand for ten minutes before she could summon courage to open it. Only Clavering or Macbean could be telegraphing her, and to hear from either meant a stab. At last she forced herself to tear the envelope open. It was a cablegram from London, and read:

Your letter just received. Am sailing for America next Saturday. You must not, shall not marry Clavering. Why did you not write me before?

HUGH PELHAM.

Serena, who dreaded telegrams, went back to her own regions. Presently she returned and looked in the drawing-room door at Elizabeth. She was sitting still by the open window in the half darkness, in the same position in which she had been half an hour before.

Serena, who knew and had known all the time that Elizabeth was unhappy, went away and was troubled in mind. Half an hour later she returned. Elizabeth had changed her position slightly. She rested her elbows on the window-sill, and her face was buried in her hands.

"Miss 'Liz'beth," said Serena, in her soft voice, and laying a hard, honest, sympathetic black hand on Elizabeth's shoulder, "fur de Lord's sake, doan' 'stress yo'se'f so. Doan' you marry dat Claverin' man, nor any 'urr man, ef you doan' want to. Me an' de gin'l will teck keer on you. Doan' you trouble 'bout nothin' 't all, honey."

"Oh, Serena," cried Elizabeth, raising a pale, glorified face and throwing her arms around Serena's black neck, "I am the happiest person in the world! He is coming! He will start day after tomorrow. Oh, Serena, I am not distressed—I am not frightened any more!"

"'Tain' dat Claverin' man!" answered Serena. She alone of the whole world had suspected Clavering's intentions.

"No! no! no! It is another man—the man I—"

Elizabeth, without finishing the sentence, slipped out of Serena's arms, upstairs to her own room, to be alone with her happiness.

Although she had heard Clavering's

name spoken, it was near midnight before she really gave him a thought. Then she wrote him a few lines—very humble, very apologetic, but no man of sense on earth could fail to know, on reading them, that the woman who wrote them was fixed in her aversion to marrying him. And as in the case of that former letter, she watched for the passing postman in the early morning and dropped the letter at his feet.

She summoned up courage to tell her father next day that Pelham was

coming.

"And I am sure," she said, blushing and faltering, "all will be right between us, and he will explain all that seemed unkind in his conduct to me."

General Brandon was sure of it, too, and was as pleased at the notion of rehabilitating Pelham as if somebody had left him a block of stock in the

Standard Oil Company.

Elizabeth scarcely knew how the next week passed, so great was her exaltation. It is said that the highest form of pleasure is release from pain. She had that and other joys besides. It was to her as if the earth had at last recovered its balance with Pelham once more her friend. She did not dare to whisper anything more, even to herself. And every day brought her nearer to that hour—that poignant hour-when she should see Pelham once more as he had always been to her. She scanned the newspapers, and found what steamers sailed on the Saturday. She guessed by which one Pelham would sail. She watched out eagerly when they would be reported, and the morning and afternoon papers were in her hands by the time they were left at the door.

On the Saturday afternoon, which was warm and summer-like, Elizabeth was watching at the window for the afternoon newspaper—the morning newspaper had not chronicled the arrival of any of the Saturday steamers. When the negro newsboy threw it on the doorway, she ran out, and in her eagerness stood bareheaded on the steps, looking for the names of the incoming steamers. She found them—

all the Saturday steamers had arrived to the day and at an early hour. And Hugh Pelham might come at any moment! The thought brought the red blood to her cheeks and a quivering

smile to her lips.

She looked down the street, under an archway of green, where played a fountain in a little open space, with brilliant tulip beds. The avenue into which the street debouched was gay with carriages and autos and merry, welldressed girls and men, tripping along by twos and threes. As she gazed toward it a hansom clattered up, and in it sat Clavering. His arrival was so sudden that he could not but note the change in Elizabeth. He had thought, on his first glance, that he had never seen her look so youthful and so handsome. She had in truth regained much of her lost beauty, and when she saw him and recognized him the pallor, the shame, the repulsion in her face were eloquent. She drew back from him involuntarily, and her greeting, although gentle, did not conceal her feelings in the least.

As usual, Clavering appeared to be in the pink of condition. The crisis through which he had lately passed, the shock of the disappointment contained in Elizabeth's letter, his four days of hard travel, had left no mark upon him. He was a strong man in

physique as well as in will.

Elizabeth showed great embarrassment, but Clavering met her without the least awkwardness. As soon as they were alone in the drawing-room, cool and darkened from the too ardent sun, Clavering came to the point.

"I was, of course, astounded to receive your letter," he said. "I was on my ranch. I had just arrived, and was sitting down to supper when the mail was brought from the post-office twenty miles away. I found if I left at once I could make the midnight train, and that would give me fast connections all the way through. So, when I had finished my supper—it took me just twenty minutes—you know a ranchman's supper isn't a function, so to speak—I got on horseback and rode

nearly thirty miles in four hours and a half. I had been riding all day, too. So you see I'm a very determined lover. This is my first love, you know—the first like this, I mean—and I couldn't afford to throw it away."

He was smiling now. The idea that the slim woman, dressed in black, sitting before him, with the red and white coming and going in her cheeks, could resist him really seemed preposterous

to him.

Elizabeth remained silent, and Clavering knew that silence in a woman is momentous. As she made no reply he said, after a long pause:

"And how about that other man?"
Elizabeth had said no word in her letter about anyone else, and started at Clavering's words.

"I—I—"

She could get no farther. It was in the beginning only a shrewd surmise of Clavering's, but Elizabeth's faltering words and shrinking manner had confirmed it.

"I knew, of course, another man had turned up; that's why I came post haste," coolly remarked Clavering. "Now tell me all about him."

Elizabeth was forced to answer.

"It is—there was—my husband's cousin, Colonel Pelham."

"Oh, yes; the fellow that persecuted you after your husband's death. He, however, is hardly the man to interfere with me."

"I—I don't understand it quite—I thought he knew all that was being done. But I had a cablegram from him."

"You must have written to him?"

"Yes."

"Before or after you wrote me?"

"Before—and when I got his answer by cable I wrote you."

"I see. You prefer to marry him?"
"Colonel Pelham has not asked me
to marry him," replied Elizabeth, with
dignity.

"But he will. Elizabeth, you are promised to me. I told you I loved you—not in the flowery style of a young loon, but of a man who has worked and thought and seen enough to make him

know his own mind. Of course I can't coerce you-but the man who gets you away from me may look out for himself. See—the habits of a man's early life and thought never leave him. My first instinct has always been to take care of my own-and I was bred and made my mark in a country where neither wife-stealing nor sweetheartstealing is permitted. Sometimes wives and sweethearts were stolen, but it was a dangerous business. Oh, I don't mean to use a gun—that went out twenty-five years ago. But there are many ways of ruining a man, and a woman, too."

He spoke quite pleasantly, sitting close to Elizabeth, and holding the crape-covered hat in his hand.

"Now tell me how you feel toward

this man, Pelham."

"Colonel Pelham was my best friend during all my married life. I could not understand his conduct to me after my husband's death. One night lately I felt the impulse to write to him—shall I tell you everything?"

"Yes."

Clavering was all calm attention

"It was the night after our last interview. It came over me how—how—that I would rather die than marry you. Yes—I mean what I say. I didn't mean to kill myself—oh, no! But I would rather have been killed than married to you."

Clavering's ruddy face grew pale. He got up, walked about the room and sat down again, still close to Elizabeth. He saw she did not mean to be intentionally cruel, but was striving earnestly to tell him the whole truth.

"I have often heard of your power over other men, and I am sure you have great power over women, too; for I felt in some way obliged to marry you unless someone came in to help me. And then I thought of Hugh Pelham, and I thought it would be at least two or three months before he got my letter; but he was evidently in London, and he cabled back. I feel sure he reached New York early this morning."

"And did that money you owed have anything to do with it?"

"Yes. It troubled me dreadfully."

"And for a paltry thousand or two you have broken your word to me broken it when I needed most of all your faith in me?"

"It was not the money wholly."

"It was also that I had lost my seat in the Senate of the United States?"

"Not altogether that—but I knew—I knew—I was at the Capitol that day."

"Pardon me, but you don't know. What does a woman know about such

things?"

Elizabeth sat silent—what was there for her to say? And then she saw a figure pass the bowed shutters, making a shadow flit across the floor; and it was the shadow of Hugh Pelham. She sprang to her feet, a new light in her eyes which Clavering had never seen before. Clavering was, for an instant, as completely forgotten as if he had never been. He saw his fate in that look, that action. He rose, too, and the next moment Hugh Pelham walked into the room. He was visibly older, more weather-beaten than he had been three years before, and, although ten years Clavering's junior, he looked quite the same age. Evil-doing is very often good for the physical man and well-doing bad for the physical man. The two men instinctively recognized each other at the first glance and hated each other instantly with a mortal hatred. Elizabeth stood next Pelham. She had given him her hand without a word, and he held it firmly. Clavering turned to Elizabeth and said:

"When can I see you again? Pray make it as soon as possible; that much I can ask, after what has passed be-

tween us."

"Excuse me," said Pelham politely, "but I don't think Mrs. Darrell can

see you again."

A dull red showed under Clavering's skin and a slight tremor shook his massive figure. It was a situation hard for any man to bear—and almost intolerable to James Clavering. He said the only thing possible under the circumstances.

"I must decline to accept your decision. It rests with Mrs. Darrell."

Elizabeth turned to Colonel Pelham.
"Will you kindly leave me with Mr.
Clavering for a moment? It is his right, and later I will explain all to you."

Pelham, with a bow, walked out of the drawing-room, and, opening the street door, gazed upon the great pile of stone which the Claverings had lately inhabited. Clavering and Elizabeth being left alone, he said at once:

"I know how it is; I saw it in your eves when the other man came. I am not one likely to ask for quarter. I accept my fate as I accepted my expulsion from the Senate and the loss of many millions of dollars. There are in the world compensations to me for the other things. For the loss of you there is no compensation. It is my first and my last chance of leading a better life, for I swear to you, Elizabeth, I meant to lead a better life if you had married me. But now-it doesn't matter in the least. I was born a hundred years too late; then I should have married you by force. I would have given my seat in the Senate to have seen such a look in your eyes when I came in as I saw when the other man came. Good-bye, Eliza-

Elizabeth gave him her hand. In all their acquaintance this was the first glimpse, the first suspicion she had had that anything like a noble and uplifting love existed in Clavering; but he, this man smirched all over, a bad husband, a bad father, who knew no truth nor honesty in his dealings with men or other women, loved once, truly, and at the moment of losing everything else he lost the only thing worthy the name of love which he had ever known in his whole life.

He took Elizabeth's hand in his; he had never so much as kissed it. He raised it to his lips, but Elizabeth, drawing back with a violent and undisguised repulsion, Clavering at once dropped her hand. He looked at her for a full minute—compelling her against her will to meet his gaze—

and then, turning, walked out of the house. On the steps outside he passed Pelham. Neither man spoke.

Pelham went into the drawingroom where Elizabeth stood, pale and trembling. As he closed the door after him she said, in an indescribable voice:

"He never kissed me-he never so

much as kissed my hand."

"I don't think you would ever have married him in any event, Elizabeth," replied Pelham gently. "But let us not speak of him. I came home as soon as I could—I had not had any news from England after I was well in the interior of Africa. I knew nothing of what had been done until I got your letter—I was coming to you, anyway—your year of widowhood was over. Oh, Elizabeth, how could you misjudge me as you did!"

Clavering found himself in the largest room of the large suite of rooms he occupied at the most expensive hotel in Washington. The April sun was just setting, and it flamed upon a huge mirror directly opposite the luxurious chair in which he sat. He looked at his own image reflected full length in the glass. It seemed to be moving, to be surrounded by other figures. He saw them well-painted and bedizened women, some of them loaded with jewels and with coronets on their heads. Then there were men, and then some in court dress and with orders sparkling on their breasts. All of them had a foreign look, they spoke a language he only half understood, and all of them were harpies. They smiled upon him and fawned upon him, and he saw himself smiling back, rather pleased, it appeared. Sometimes he and this crowd were moving through splendid rooms; there were balls and dinners going on, and he could hear the clash and rhythm of orchestras. Again, they were in dismal business offices, or in raging crowds upon continental bourses. At first he was always surrounded, and it seemed as if he were losing something all the time. Gradually the men and

women about him no longer fawned upon him. They were familiar with him; then they jeered him; and presently they menaced him. They tried to strangle him, to rob him, and he had lost something-money or power, or capacity, or perhaps all three, and he could not defend himself. And they grew more and more foreign to himhe could not understand their language at all. They talked among themselves and he did not know what they were saying. And after awhile he grew helpless, and did not know where he was; and then he saw himself standing on a bridge at night, in a foreign city. There were many lights upon the bridge which were reflected in the black and rushing river. He was about to throw himself into the river when it suddenly came to him that it was cold, and he was thinly clad and hungry. And then he knew that he was in a strange country, and it came to him that he would return to his own land, to a place where there was warmth and comfort, and the strange thing he had lost would be awaiting him. But then he heard wild voices shrieking at him out of the darkness that he had no home, no country—that he would never again be warmed and fed. This produced a kind of horror in him, which made him cry out-a loud cry, he thought it. But it was really low and half smothered. And to his amazement he was not in his room at the hotel, but standing in the doorway of his own house. It was night, and he heard a great clock inside his own house strike the hournine o'clock. He could not remember how or why he had got from his hotel to his deserted house. He saw the caretaker, an old hobgoblin of a negro, peer at him from a basement window and he shrank behind the great stone pillars of the doorway. It was a warm, soft spring night, without a moon, but the purple floor of heaven glittered with palpitating stars. The street was always a quiet one-tonight it was so strangely still that he feared to move lest his footfall should sound too loud. And while he stood, dazed and

hesitating within his doorway, he saw two figures come together down the street and stop at Elizabeth's house. One was Elizabeth; the other was the man she loved. The night was so warm that the house door was left open. He watched the two figures mount the steps and go into the house. The man touched Elizabeth's arm in helping her up the steps. It was a simple, conventional thing, but Clavering saw revealed in it a love so deep, so constant, so passionately tender, that he thought he had never seen real love before.

Clavering turned away to enter upon the fate that had been laid bare to him.

changer belongers there

enphymo

PARTING

DEAR Love, we near the parting of the ways;
This is the hour when we must pray a prayer
To the good God that made the road so fair.
He who vouchsafed to us the golden days,
Filled with great hours that set the blood ablaze
Within our veins—who made us wise to wear
The halo set so briefly on our hair—
This is the hour to kneel and give Him praise!

We did not find the gleaming pot of gold

Beneath the rainbow's foot; we may not share
The treasure that we dreamed was swinging there,
And hand from hand must slip its clinging hold.
But we have been magnificently blest,
For we have known the rapture of the quest!

ETHEL M. KELLEY.



LOTS OF ROOM

HOWELL—I see that Rowell has put his property in his wife's name.

POWBLL—Well, there's enough of it.

"Property?"

"No; name. He married a Russian."



WHISKY NOT HIS DRINK

"I suppose it was because he wasn't a Kentucky man."

WHEN NERO CAME TO CHEYENNE

By William R. Lighton

A GAIN and again and again, more times than you can count, you have looked on and wondered while trivial and apparently unrelated events linked themselves subtly but inevitably together until they made strong chains that

bound men to their destiny.

There was the celebrated case of the Kansan who, if his wife had not made one extra green-apple dumpling for dinner, might have been a governor, or a congressman, or something. But she made the extra apple dumpling, and he ate it, then stayed in bed all the next day, while the plum dumpling of office went to somebody else. And there was the case of the girl about to be married. On the eve of her bridal day a neighbor's boy fell down a well. He was rescued unhurt; but the incident set the girl to thinking. What if she should have children and they should all fall down wells and be killed, leaving her childless and dependent upon cold charity at last! So she canceled the wedding and lived to a green old age—that is to say, an unripe and sour old age-of singleness.

By the same token, if one fatal drop of rain had not fallen out of an all but cloudless sky on a certain brilliant Wyoming day, this story would not have happened. I should have missed meeting Steve; together we should have missed laying our plans; and Nero would have come to Cheyenne and gone away again in humdrum

quietude.

This is how it befell. I was riding alone over the trail that follows along

the eastward foot of Rawhide Buttes. The day was hot, windy, dusty; I was thirsty, hungry and tired, and there was not food nor water nor shelter from the sun within a dozen miles. I thought that a small smoke would help matters, and felt for the materials; but I had changed coats at Lusk, and my full pouch was miles behind me. By and bye, with diligent feeling about, I found a single crumpled cigarette paper. Turning all my pockets inside out, I gathered a scant pinch of tobacco crumbs, well mixed with lint, and at the last I found the end of one broken match—the head end. So far, so good. But the wind was high. I dismounted, squatted upon the sand, took off my coat and spread it over my head as a shelter tent. There, with infinite care, I made my cigarette and struck the match end on my boot heel. Success again; it burned and the cigarette was lit. I climbed back into the saddle and drew one long, thankful breath of the fragrant smoke. Then, though it was the very middle of the dry season, and no rain was due for a good two months, one big, solitary drop fell from a hand's breadth of cloud overhead, striking my cigarette full upon its glowing end, and I was left mourning and desolate.

Five miles away across the sands I espied a moving black speck, and made out that it was a horseman following the Chimney Rock trail. Any right-minded son of Wyoming would be sure to have a plenty of the wherewithal for a smoke; and in my then state of soul what mattered a ten-mile ride? Three-quarters of an hour later

I came within hailing distance of the traveler, and saw that it was Steve, the giant cook of the Coffey roundup.

He drew rein and waited for me to

"Hullo!" he said, and put out a

mighty fist.

I enlarged upon my desperate plight. Grinning, he brought out a big sackful of "sheepherder's delight," a thick bunch of papers and a good handful of

"Keep 'em." he said, when I would have given them back after satisfying

my needs.

"Have you got more?" I asked.

He shook his head in answer. "I've quit," he said. "Got so it didn't taste good. I'm goin' to wait till I get a sure hankering again."

I offered my pocket flask, but again

he shook his head.

"Haven't took a drink since the second day of last April," he said. "Savin' my money. Haven't drawed none all summer.

"That's good, Steve," I said in my simplicity, and between puffs of my cigarette went on to speak a few wellworn words in the way of a homily on virtue. He listened with an ominous

gravity.

"That's so," he said at last. "This thing of drinkin' every day, regular, ain't no good. It kind of takes the aidge off your longin', so you don't rightly enjoy a real old tear when she comes. I've been savin' up till the alfalfa's all stacked. We're goin' down to Cheyenne next week and help run the town awhile-me, and Black's Jim, and Red McGee, and some more. Better come along. It's Frontier Day next week, and everybody'll be there. I've got a hundred and eighty dollars, and I stay three days. That's sixty dollars a day."

I felt instant regret for that senseless moral courage. Frontier Day at Cheyenne, in the company of those merry half-gods, would be an event; and there was I, committed by my fool tongue to precepts of stiff rectitude. I laughed

weakly.

"After what I've just said? Con-

stancy is a jewel, Steve."
"Shucks!" he retorted. "You want to leave your jewelry at home when you go to Cheyenne. Come on. It ain't goin' to be no common time; it's goin' to be a whizzer-a regular old

gee-whizzer."

I knew what that meant. In the staid and rule-bound East to drink is to drink. There the dull theme stops short. But in the big cow-land out West there are endless variations played upon it. There "private drunk" describes the poor estate of the man who hunts a quiet spot and drinks himself into a fleeting forgetfulness of whatever ill besets him. He may or may not deserve sympathy; at best he is working only for ends of his own. The "big drunk" is one wherein a dozen or so of congenial ones foregather, for pure sport's sake, their behavior being always well under police control. But the "whizzer" brings together a whole countryside, fifty or a hundred miles across, and turns the place of assembly into a pagan paradise. Then the police get deaf and blind, perforce, and timid folk keep within doors or slink through back alleyways. Whatever there is in a man, beneath the mask of his sober reserve-whether bold daring, or wild deviltry, or heaven-born humor, or any other form of genius -surely comes out. And the superlative of "whizzer" is "gee-whizzer." Now you know, as well as I can tell you, what was likely to happen at Cheyenne.

"But Cheyenne is a hundred and forty miles from Lusk," I said, in

wavering protest.

"You come down and meet us at the Nine Bar Ranch, and then it won't be so far," he grinned. "We'll start from there Monday noon, and we can make it by Wednesday night, in time not to miss much."

"All right, Steve," I said; and then

we went our separate ways.

It was a little past sunset of Wednesday when we rode into Cheyenne, ten of us, and felt tentatively for a place among the crowding thousands. A brief lull had fallen after the day's sports, while the town caught its breath for the coming night. What should we do first, to put ourselves in fit form?

"Let's go get a drink," said Red

McGee.

"Listen at him!" Steve growled.
"If we start now that'll mean ten drinks apiece before supper on an empty stomach, and then where would we be? There's lots of time—Thursday, Friday, Saturday—three whole days."

"Let's go and nail a place to sleep," said Black's Jim. "Beds'll be scarce."

But Steve seemed hard to please. "Sleep!" he scoffed. "We didn't come down here to sleep. We can sleep at home. What we'll do now is to feed.

I know where. Come on."

We followed to a dim-lit place underground somewhere and fed as became us at such a time. We ate steaks and then steaks, and then more steaks, with rich, black coffee running along between, until I was made to think of the nursery rhyme about the man who ate a cow and ate a calf, et cetera, winding up with the priest and all the people for dessert. Then we went out and walked the streets, smoking, waiting for the hour when things would loosen up and get interesting. Once or twice we turned in at some place where the lights were bright and each took what he liked best, but nothing much. At one of these places Steve's roving eye caught sight of a lithographed poster hanging on the wall advertising a performance of "Quo Vadis." Right there Fate came in and laid its inexorable hand upon us.

"Boys, we'll see that show," Steve said, with quick resolution. "I ain't saw a right good show in four years; and that name has got the go in it. Come on. We're just in time to pick out good seats before she commences."

I excused myself. "I've seen that play twice," I said. "It's all right; but I'd rather stay outside and watch the crowd."

"All right," Steve acquiesced. "You

be at Burke's Place when the show's out, and we'll pick you up there." Then the nine of them went away and left me.

I had a good time. Never mind particulars. All Cheyenne had a good time that night—a noisy, high-spirited, care-free time. The mood of carnival was in the air; the oldest and grayest and gravest of those that drifted up and down the streets had jumped clear back in one easy jump to the temper of childhood and rioted in sheer excess of youngness. It was wondrously fine and jovial to see.

I wandered about until I was tired; then I sought the rendezvous of Burke's Place and sat down, glancing over the papers and watching the people come in. Just within the swinging doors was a descending flight of three steps, and nine out of ten of those who entered fell down the stairway. It was good sport to observe their various ways of taking the mishap, and time passed without dragging.

By and bye one appeared who was much out of the ordinary. He was in full evening dress, to the last detail of Inverness coat, dove-gray gloves and opera-hat. At the doorway he paused, raising a monocle to his eye; then came deliberately down the steps, walked deliberately to the bar and deliberately ordered what he wanted. One who would dare such dress and such conduct on the night of Frontier Day at Cheyenne must have rare stuff in him, I thought; and I got up and walked to his side.

He was taking a dry Martini cocktail in slow, calm sips. Presently he turned, put up his monocle and scanned me with the same unruffled composure. He was a fairly good-looking fellow, small, but with an air that made up for his want of stature. I spoke, with friendly intent, and he graciously met me halfway, with words of lively interest concerning the turbulent scenes within and without. I found out his name. Suppose we call him Smith. He was the man who played the part of Nero in the show.

When his cocktail was gone I hinted

at another, but he waved the hint aside.

"One at a time," he said. "I never

take more. Thank you."

He drew his coat about him and was preparing to go. But just then the doors were flung wide open, and Steve and the boys came down in a tumbling cataract. They had loitered, evidently, along the way from the theatre, and were feeling very lighthearted. At sight of the novel figure standing before him Steve paused for a puzzled moment; then madness came upon him. Stooping quickly he put his huge arms about the immaculate Nero, lifted him up bodily and laid him at his length upon the bar.

"I want to pawn this treasure of mine for the drinks," he said to the

barkeeper.

Nero was astonished; but he was game, too, and, lying where he was, his hand sought his pocket.

"Permit me to redeem myself," he

said. "How much?"

"One-fifty," said the barkeeper; and the victim paid. It was plain that he would have liked to let his own glass go untasted; but he divined that that must not be, so he sipped at it leisurely.

"Mr. Smith," I said, "let me make you acquainted with some of the finest fellows in Wyoming." I went on to mention names, and Smith shook hands all around. Unfortunately, in the excitement of the moment, I forgot to speak of the identity that lay hidden under his own name. That was where I blundered.

Steve seemed conscience-stricken.
"A friend of yours, Billy? I'm right

sawry, I sure am."

But Nero interrupted. "Pray don't speak of it," he begged smoothly. "Not the slightest harm has been done. I like to meet you Westerners; you're so—so uncommonplace."

The doors flew open again and Red McGee, lagging behind the others, fell down the steps. He lay quite still for a little time, then picked himself up with many words.

"Well, thank God!" he cried. "I've found one place in this town that you

don't have to climb to get in. I've clumb and clumb till I'm plumb wore out. Climb up into a place, take one little drink and then turn right around and do a lot more hard climbin' to get out again."

Nero smiled. I liked his face better when he smiled. "With all that climbing you must be getting pretty well elevated by this time," he said; and that cost McGee one-sixty-five. That made three for Nero, who never took

but one.

I thought I saw a chance to help Steve square himself.

"Steve, how was the show?" I asked, supposing, of course, that his childlike mind had enjoyed the fervid spectacle.

"Rotten!" he thundered. "Strictly on the bum. And you said it was a good piece! You're awful easy to suit. Shucks! That king in it—what was his name? — Ne-ro — him!" Desperately I plucked at his sleeve, but there was no stopping him. "It's goin' to cost me two weeks' pay to forget him. He was sure the rankest king I've saw—looked like somethin' the cats had fetched in from the barn. And act! Why, say—"

I took him forcibly by the arm and

led him away out of doors.

"Steve!" I groaned. "That's Nero in there."

He craned his neck to look back through the window. "Him?" he questioned. "I reckon I've done it now, ain't I?"

"Call the boys out," I said. "We'll have to go somewhere else now." But I had much to learn about the giant's

temper.

"Go somewhere else?" he echoed.
"You'll go without me, then. This
is just gettin' good. I'm goin' back in
there and talk to Nero for a spell."

And back he went, his bronzed face broadly smiling, his big hand out-

stretched.

"Say, look here," he said heartily; "it ain't my fault that I can't keep my mouth shut, and it ain't your fault that you can't act. What do you say to callin' the thing off and startin' a new deal?"

Nero, gentleman that he was, took the proffered hand and laughed aloud in unfeigned mirth.

"Give it a name, boys," he said.

"It seems to be on me again."

That was the fourth. If Nero had seriously intended going the intention was dissipated by this time. The infection of jocund abandon was in his blood; his fine eyes were alight, his clean-lined face wore a hale flush, his white teeth gleamed between lips broadly parted. He flung the cape of his Inverness back upon his shoulders and stood erect.

"Let's find a table," he suggested.
"We must get better acquainted; and
we don't want to stand up from now
till morning. Barkeeper, give us some

dry champagne, in pints."

Once I looked at my watch, and it was a half-hour past midnight; again, and it was three o'clock. Simple arithmetic would not serve for keeping tally of the various things that were set before us in those hours; that would need higher mathematics. Nor would simple English suffice for telling of what happened between times; that would need the gift of tongues. Do you think that sordid and low, you Easterners? Then you should have stood by and looked and listened; you would have begged for a place at the table. It doesn't work the same way, East and West. The difference may be in the air or it may be in the men; I am not sure. Chanta-Seechee Red, in his book, pointed the distinction with rare force one time, when an Eastern female cousin chided him for drinking and rolling in the gutter. "Gutter?" said he. "What put gutters into your mind? When I'm drinking, out home, I walk on the telegraph wires. There's nothing high enough for me." There you have it, exactly. Qualities and gifts wholly unsuspected cropped out. You would have looked in vain for signs to revolt you. Nobody thought of getting drunk.

If I could remember the things that were said, right and left, with reckless prodigality, my fortune would be made. Wit gushed and sparkled in an unchecked flood. Nero was simply incomparable. By and bye he stood up on his chair and recited the story of the cuckoo clock and the chronic inebriate; and then Steve told of the whistling cow in the alfalfa patch. If you do not know those stories, make haste and get a good man to tell them to you. Your life will have a new zest thereafter.

Once Steve got up for a minute to stretch his great legs. He came back

to us beaming.

"Jim was wantin' a place to sleep," he cried. "Remember? Well, he's found it. He's fell into a wool-rack, out by the back door, and got tangled up in the sticks so he couldn't get out. He's sound asleep. Come out and take a look."

We went out in a body; and we did things to the unconscious man that would make him use his mind when he awoke. Then we went back to our

table.

"My head's perfectly clear," Nero challenged, though no one had expressed a doubt of it. "I can prove it to you. Where's the man that wants to swap something? I don't care what; I'll trade anything with anybody."

Red McGee stood up. "Here!" he shouted. "I'm your man. Let's

swap boots and breeches."

The exchange was made. Nero took and donned the cowman's hairy Angora chaps and high-heeled riding-boots with their jingling spurs, then paraded before us about the room—a comical figure, Fifth avenue from head to waist, and Wyoming from there down. He was perfectly happy, and a little vain, too, I think, of his fine appearance. Red McGee went and linked arms with him, wearing Nero's full-dress trousers and patent-leathers, and they finished their march together, winding up with a cakewalk, while the joyous onlookers, a hundred strong, whistled ragtime.

"Oh, boys, boys!" Nero gasped, when he was in his chair again, "it's too fine to end. Why should it end? Life's short, anyway; let's enjoy it

while it lasts. I'll tell you: let's hire a big wagon and go to the Yellowstone country. We'll take an extra wagon for champagne. We'll show 'em a touch of high life, won't we? And we won't come back till we get good and ready. The show? Oh, blow the show! I'm tired of acting, anyway. I'll quit 'em, and we'll start right after breakfast." He stopped and wiped his eyes upon the back of his hand. "Why these tears?" he questioned plaintively.

The new day was upon us when we went in a crowd through the streets to Nero's hotel. He still wore his oddly assorted costume, and the people who were abroad turned to look. We saw him upstairs to the door of his room,

and there, though he protested, we left him.

"Good-bye," he said, as he wrung our hands again and again. "You're kings and princes, every one of you, and till death o'ertakes me I'll ne'er

forget you."

But alas for the weakness of mortality! In the middle of the afternoon, as we were walking up the street, we came suddenly upon a spick and span figure in frock coat and silk hat, sporting a cane and a monocle. It was Nero again, clothed and in his right mind. As he came abreast of us he turned his eyes upon us for a moment in an interested gaze, then passed calmly on his way. He had already forgotten us. And we let it rest there.

9

BEHIND THE TIMES

BEHIND the times" expresses pat My sorry case. This last year's hat And shabby coat the fact betray. Her father frowns, and well he may—My pocketbook is lean and flat.

This hustling age I can't combat;
Its fleeting fames, its fortunes fat
Elude my grasp. I'm doomed to stay
Behind the times.

But there's a game of tit-for-tat;
I'm up to date, at least, in that.
The world may run its whirling way
For all o'me, since yesterday
I kissed her while her father sat
Behind the Times.

JENNIE BETTS HARTSWICK.

到你

CHOLLIE—I understand that Miss Flighty was one of your traveling companions aboard the *Oceanic*.

Dicky—Oh, yes; she was my companion in arms.

AT THE VALLEY'S EDGE

By Edward Boltwood

ISS BARBARA KANE, satisfied with her simple, black evening gown, left her room in the Extons' house in Tuxedo and went down the corridor to Mrs. Exton's door. Three years ago, when she had taken Barbara from the hospital, Mrs. Exton had spared herself a lady's maid, but she soon discovered that a trained nurse and a lady's maid are by no means the same, and now Miss Kane found her employer in the deft hands of Victoire.

"You look charming, Barbara," sighed Mrs. Exton, with an anxious glance at her own fretful face in the mirror. "My hair is too high. You are quite incompetent, Victoire."

"Thank you, m'dame," murmured Victoire, and hurried away. Servants were apt to hurry away from Mrs. Exton when she was through with them.

Mrs. Exton sighed again into the mirror. She was a fragile, pretty woman. From the window Barbara gazed across the lawn, pink in the sunset.

"My husband will be late," complained Mrs. Exton, adjusting a brace-let lazily. "He loses civilized habits in that horrible mining country. I've noticed it more than ever since he returned this time. When was it? Tuesday—Wednesday?"

"Mr. Exton came from Montana on Tuesday," said Barbara. "He has driven to the stables. Vincent Minnerly was in the dog-cart also."

"Yes, Martin drove him to the postoffice so that Vincent could mail proofsheets or something. They must have made a queer combination, those two. Have you decided, Barbara?" The girl did not reply at once, and Mrs. Exton eyed her enviously. Miss Kane's straight, healthful figure was silhouetted against the glass. She had a gracefully boyish profile and dark brown hair, which clustered low on her neck and forehead.

"I think I have decided," said Barbara leisurely.

"To say yes?"
"To say yes."

"I am so glad!" exclaimed Mrs. Exton, with conventional ecstasy. "Vincent Minnerly is so talented—all the book critics agree on that—and he is so rich. You are very wise, I'm sure. Really, the whole thing is as romantic as any of his novels. He must be terribly in love to—to—"

"To marry a nurse—a paid companion?"

"Oh, my dear!" protested Mrs. Exton shrilly. "I didn't say that. You should not look at it in that way. You should think only of his happiness. That is the way I tried to think of it when Martin begged me to marry him. If one has the good fortune to be necessary to a man that is enough for one, isn't it? Is that the first bell?" She curved her waxen throat and pat-

ted the fluff of lace on her low corsage.

"Shall we go down?"

Barbara gave the lady an arm with a trace of her professional manner. There had been no real need of Barbara's services during her last year or two with Mrs. Exton. She had comforted herself, however, with the reflection that she had been given time to catch her breath and to review in books the nerve-racking grind of training-school and hospital. Then Vin-

cent Minnerly asked her to marry him, and the grind need never enslave her again. In Mrs. Exton's phrase, it was as romantic and comfortable as fiction.

They numbered six at dinner. Exton was late, according to his wife's prediction, but Minnerly managed to slip into his seat before the bouillon disappeared. The novelist wore modish clothes, with those trifling vagaries of toilet which impart an indefinite foreign air. They were in keeping with his distinguished face. He had the alert mouth of a man used to attracting attention, and it was set off by a short, close, tawny beard.

The two other guests were Adelaide Crimmock and Fitz Harding, the watercolor man. The hostess shrugged her

shoulders at the empty chair.
"You'll excuse Martin, won't you,
Adelaide?" said she. "You won't

mind him?"

"My love, a husband with a jaw like his is certainly to be minded," said Mrs. Crimmock, in the quick, loud voice which gave her a reputation for cleverness among the undiscerning. "Let us hope you mind him. I would, if I were you."

"My fault, I'm afraid, that he's not on time," apologized Minnerly, and looked over the epergne at Barbara. "I stopped to make those revisions in that yarn, Miss Kane—those changes

you spoke of."

"Monsieur attends, I think," said Fitz Harding. "I know his fairy tread."

The door banged and Exton pounded in, smoothing his tie.

"Sorry," he grunted. "No, don't

care for soup."

He was an enormous, rawboned man and he sat down heavily. His wrinkled dinner coat fitted him badly, and the collar was awry about his sinewy neck. Mrs. Exton waved her fan.

"We shall expect now to see you blossom into an authoress, Barbara,"

she said playfully.

"I hope no such outrageous misfortune awaits you, Miss Kane," laughed Minnerly. "Outrageous?" asked Barbara.

"Yes. Authorship is martyrdom that mankind may be entertained."

"Conceit!" cried Mrs. Crimmock.
"I've seen many of your stories in print that were not entertaining in the least."

"Anybody can get an entertaining story into print," observed Minnerly. "To get a bad story published requires brains."

"Do you believe that, Mr. Exton?"

said Mrs. Crimmock.

"Eh? Oh, yes." Exton made an effort to respond and failed clumsily. "I'm not much on stories," he acknowledged.

"They do present difficulties," said

Minnerly.

"Lots of them are difficult to read," put in Mrs. Crimmock sharply, "if

that's what you mean."

"I mean it is difficult to make them easy to read." Minnerly sipped his sherry meditatively. "For instance, there's the happy ending. Most people insist on that, you know."

"Well," said Fitz Harding, "if you twist the story into happiness when it should logically end otherwise, is that

good art, Minnerly?"

"Yes, if you're a good twister."

"Is it honest?"

The author smiled. "What has honesty to do with it?" he retorted.

Barbara was vaguely discomfited by the question, and absently she watched Exton, who was stroking his stubby black mustache in his attempt to follow the discussion. She did not know him well, for he was seldom in the East.

"You see, Miss Kane," went on Minnerly, "everybody naturally prefers the agreeable to the disagreeable, and readers are not unnatural—except the

critics, sometimes."

"But if the agreeable is false," said Barbara slowly, "and untrue? That doesn't seem to me quite honest on the author's part. Probably I don't understand."

Minnerly flushed perceptibly.

"I presume," suggested Fitz Harding, "that if we were frank we would

all confess to a desire to dodge what is hard. We are like a man under orders to cross a black, forbidding mountain who persuades himself that he can reach the other side by following a sunshiny valley. He would easily persuade himself, wouldn't he? So he dodges the mountain and-"

"And never crosses it as he was sent

to do," said Barbara.

"No; but he has a good time in the sunshine," supplemented Mrs. Crimmock, "and I'm drinking the health, Vincent, of all of you nice guides to

the valley."

Fitz Harding and Mrs. Exton laughed and raised their claret glasses. But Miss Kane leaned forward curiously, seeing that Exton at length had sensed some of the talk.

"Hold on," said he, clearing his throat. "How about the-the boss, who orders the man over the mountain? What's he going to think of a man who dodges?"

"Oh, the superior of my little allegory," interpreted the painter, "is fate, you know - destiny. Destiny can't think anything of anybody."

"Destiny?" hesitated Exton doubt-

fully.

"Yes-luck."

"I see." Exton frowned while his wife gave him a momentary, patronizing smile. "I see," he proceeded doggedly. "Then the man is a quitter. He ought to go straight where destiny sends him, or else-well, you know what the Almighty thinks about quitters."

"Martin!" piped Mrs. Exton.

"The mountain isn't real," said Fitz Harding somewhat helplessly. "You're out in Montana, perhaps,

"Oh, I beg your pardon," mumbled Exton. "I reckon, like Miss Kane,

that I don't understand."

His eyes met Barbara's as he said this. The girl imagined she saw an odd flash in them which gleamed for the fraction of a second. She broke her lettuce reflectively, not sure that she liked Minnerly's notion of literary honesty. Usually Minnerly was piqued and fascinated by her moods, because he could not always identify them, but tonight he was piqued because her mood was so intelligible.

"I told you that authorship is martyrdom," he asserted. "This is one of its penalties, to be called a guide to-I think quitters was the word, Exton?"

"I didn't mean to offend," apologized Exton. "But if I was telling a story and the path was marked from the start, I believe I'd follow it wherever it led.

"It might lead to the waste-paper basket," said Minnerly lightly, "if the

path was unpleasant.'

"Maybe it wouldn't be wasted, even so," concluded Exton, crumbling a

cracker in his fist.

They had coffee on the dimly lit piazza. Mrs. Exton, alive to the obvious exigencies of the situation, asked Barbara to play for them. Before Minnerly could follow Barbara through the French window to the conveniently distant piano, Martin Exton went with her to the drawing-room. Mrs. Exton drummed petulantly with her fan, and Minnerly resumed his steamer-chair.

Exton fumbled at the wick of the tall piano-lamp with his blunt fingers, and Miss Kane sat down, touching the

"I didn't know you played," he said. "Doesn't seem much in your line."

"It's in the line of the business of a professional companion," laughed Bar-

"And of a trained nurse?"

"Hardly. Nurses haven't time for-

"No, I should think not," said Ex-"Not much music and art about their work, eh?" He planted his elbows on the piane. "All that art stuff they talked at dinner was sort of nonsense to me, alongside of real work. That's because I'm thick-headed, of course. I'm used to rolling up my sleeves and doing things. That's all I'm good for."

"Yes, I understand," sighed Barbara. "I've done things, too."

"I'll bet you have," asserted Exton

heartily. "Nurses get great chances, don't they? To do things, I mean. Chances nobody else gets, man or woman."

Miss Kane opened a sheet of music briskly, rubbed her hands together, and launched a Chopin prelude. Ex-

ton straightened his back.

"I guess nurses are sent over that mountain of Fitz Harding's pretty often," he pursued. "I was wonder-

ing what you thought of it."

'I think-I would not-know enough-to find-the valley." Barbara spoke rhythmically to the beat of the melody.

"Somebody might know enough to

show you the valley."

"Somebody in the story?" "Oh, it's all a story."

She was surprised and glanced up at him, allowing the prelude to wander into an intermittent impromptu of minor chords. Exton was scowling at

his tightly folded hands.

"The only kind of a story in my line," he said, "is the story that really happens. It's queer-but I know of a real story about a poor devil who got sent over a tough piece of country once.'

"In Montana?" asked Miss Kane.

"Yes, in Montana. It was hard traveling out there where this fellow was, and everything was against him. The worst of it was that he was alone. He had to make his own trail across, all alone.

"Why?"

"Well, that was his luck, you see," said Exton. "Besides, he wanted to find out whether he was any good, or just an ordinary quitter."

"And he got the best of it."

"How can you tell?"

Barbara made no further pretense of playing. She rested her white rounded forearms on the music-rack.

"Because," she reasoned, "you wouldn't tell the anecdote unless you liked it, and you wouldn't like it unless the man beat the mountain, unless he won. That's logic. Now I must go to Mrs. Exton."

"What if the man didn't win?"

said Exton. "What if I was the man myself?"

"You don't make up very probable stories. A man like you would win."

She turned to slide the music into the case at her side. With no warning Exton's hand burned for an instant on

her bare shoulder.

"I didn't win," he groaned. "I couldn't. I fought hard and I'm beaten. I'm looking—for the valley, the sunshine. Can't you see? I'm looking—"
"No," she gasped. "What do you

mean?"

She sprang up, facing him. His big chin twitched and his eyes blazed.

"Don't say it," she whispered.
"Don't dare to say it. What must

you think of me?"

"My God, I'm through with thinking. I'm through with fighting. I'm beaten." He raised his arm with the hopeless gesture of one guarding against a blow which he knows must strike.

Breathless and as if startled by a phantom, they gazed at each other under the crimson glow of the lamp, and Mrs. Exton's thin, inane voice quavered in the distance. dropped his arm limply.

"I've insulted you," he muttered. "I'm sorry. I can say no more than

that."

"Yes-you can say more than that," ventured Barbara solemnly. "You must say more, because you are not beaten. You are not the sort of man who seeks a valley when his mountain is to be crossed. You are not-a quitter."

"How do you know?" he said hoarsely. "What do you know of duty to be followed, and easy happiness that tempts you away from it? But if you tell me I can make this fight, then I can make it, and if you send me back to that mountain I'll

never leave it again."

Barbara did not hear the final sentence. Hardly had he begun to speak before she was staring through the scarlet circle of light to a picture beyond it, looming mystically in the shadows. She saw a dreary hospital ward with its rows of narrow cots. Her nostrils caught the pungent, familiar odors of the place. Two orderlies wheeled a hospital carriage on its way to the operating-room. A blue-gowned nurse walked beside it stanchly, stroking the sufferer's forehead, soothing him with brave, soft words.

"I'll never leave it again," repeated. Exton. "You are the only woman in

the world. Good-bye."

Impulsively she held out her hand, and he raised it to his lips, reverently but with a firm movement which she could not resist. The portières rustled behind them.

"Mrs. Exton wishes her wrap," said Minnerly in the doorway. "Have you

"Yes, I can find it," interrupted

Exton, and went out.

"It is stifling here," faltered Barbara. "Isn't the piazza pleasanter?"

"That depends, I suppose, on one's company," insinuated Minnerly suave-

Barbara sat down on the pianobench. Her wits were lame, and she felt a strange physical weariness.

"You may be interested in knowing," she said, "that I am leaving here tomorrow. Mrs. Exton's health-

"Where will you go?" asked Minnerly. "What will you do? You must give me your answer tonight, Barbara. Don't you see how happy we can make our lives together? Don't you hear the call of Fitz Harding's happy valley?"

She half closed her eyes and he bent closer. He did not guess that she was looking into the crystal-white purity of an operating-room. A squarejawed surgeon and his helpers, in their snowy aprons, worked with the precision of steel machines at the glass table, fighting for a life against the most murderous, most treacherous of foes. Their faces were set like the grim faces of seasoned soldiers; they hissed their words coolly; the room was a battlefield.

"Don't you see the happy valley?" persisted Minnerly. "I can make the world very happy for you, Barbara."

Barbara lifted her head proudly. "I am going over my mountain, too," said she.

"Over the-" Minnerly's voice failed

him in his uncertainty.

"I am going back to the hospital," she declared. "It hurts me to distress you, but I must be frank. I

shall not-quit."

"Exton's slang!" wildly blurted Minnerly, losing all control and bringing down his knuckles on the ivory keys. "I saw the vulgar cad kissing your hand. Your lover sends you. where he chooses."

Barbara rose slowly. She wondered now why she had ever hesitated over this man. The evil suggestion in his weak, tremulous eyes branded her

cheeks.

"I have no lover," she exclaimed passionately. "Mr. Exton has sent me away-out of the valley. I shall never see him again, nor, I hope, you. Shall we go to the piazza?"

" "You are throwing away happi-

ness," he cried.
." I am throwing away make-believe happiness, the false happiness of one of your stories," she said. "But this is a story told honestly to its ending."



A SUGGESTION

HE-My dear, we are living extravagantly. Here are menus for how to live on thirteen cents a day.

SHE-Beautiful; but we'd save more money if they found out how to play

the races for that.

ABÉLARD TO HÉLOÏSE

BID me not stay! Ah, love, my faltering soul Lurks o'er the chasm fell,
And only thou, my sweet, canst keep it whole—
Or plunge it down to hell.

Tempt me no more! Thy beauty is my shame;
Priest that I am, I plead
A moment's glance to fend thy luring fame—
Love, wilt thou never heed?

Kiss me again—just once! Ah, sweet, not now
For me the cell, the prayer;
Cling to me—close! Be faith, and life, and vow,
Be heaven, and bid me there!

ARTHUR STANLEY RIGGS



A SURE THING

HA! ha!" chortled a loud-voiced man, slapping Grimshaw on the back, "I'll bet ten dollars you don't remember me!"
"You win!" returned Grimshaw coldly, as he passed on.





NOTHING UNUSUAL

HEWITT—Did Gruet marry for love?

JEWETT—Yes, but it was unrequited affection; he can't get hold of his wife's money.

THE successful lawyer was heard to say that cases alter circumstances.

THE APPRECIATORS: A WOOING

By Zona Gale

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

А Youtн	(whose face is not as the faces of other men.)
A MAID	(whose face is not as the faces of other women.)
A MAN	(with a dead soul.)
A Widow.	THE RESERVE AND THE PROPERTY OF THE PARTY OF

Chorus of Poets, Dead Souls, Widows, etc.

SCENE I—Veranda of a country clubhouse by the sea.

THE MAID—Oh, the day is beautiful, the day is beautiful! I will go out and mix with the day and breathe its wine.

THE MAN—Take me; otherwise I shall sit here drinking whisky-and-sodas and spoil my complexion. Where are your golf-sticks?

THE MAID—Oh, let there be no golf on this imperishable day! Let there be nothing—nothing but sweet air and white wind. One would think you were an athlete.

THE MAN (abashed)—So one would. Well, let's walk to the Cove and eat thousands of steamed clams.

THE MAID—Oh, the day, the day! The sweet, gold day with its unutterable caves of air! (They walk away.)

THE WIDOW (plaintively, in a hammock)—Will no one amuse me?

THE YOUTH (gasing out at sea)—Oh, to be in a boat, under a purple sail, sun-smitten! Oh, to be in a boat—

THE WIDOW (petulantly)—With me? THE YOUTH (recalled abruptly)—Yes, with you. With something that is like all beauty, and all calm, and the wisdom of dead ages.

THE WIDOW (bitterly)—Thank you. Personally, I prefer live tact to dead

wisdom. One would think I were the obelisk. Find me a fan.

THE YOUTH—Let us walk. Let us go down to the sea and watch, through warm hours, for Proteus.

THE WIDOW—Mercy! Do you believe in sea-serpents? You're stepping on my dress. How awkward you are!

THE YOUTH—See where, prone in the labyrinthine light, float purple dreams, waiting to be quickened into thought! Behold how— (They walk to the sea.)

Scene II-The Shifting Sands

CHORUS OF POETS

Come early, song, come early, lute, For love is of your doing; In livery of silver air Come dress the wind for wooing.

CHORUS OF DEAD SOULS AND WIDOWS

Bright eyes, ripe lips,
Oh, the hours are flying,
With here a kiss and there a kiss
And every care a-dying.

THE WIDOW—What a bully day—
THE MAID—Divine! Oh, fairy-like!
THE WIDOW (severely)—I beg your pardon. I never speak of a day being bully unless it is bully for some good

reason. One would think I were a weather bureau. I was about to say, what a bully day for bathing.

THE MAN-Out of sight. You're

going in?

THE WIDOW-I am if I can get some-

one to teach me to swim.

THE YOUTH—To swim, to swim! To float upon the sea's breast of turquoise and jade! To lie—

THE MAN (to the WIDOW)—Let me teach you to swim. I can teach you in three lessons. (Moves to her

side.)

THE MAID (softly to the YOUTH)— Oh, do you not see the white gulls flying before the gray of the ghoul-like clouds?

THE YOUTH (gazing at the MAID as at

one awakened)-Aye, I see.

THE MAID—So flees my soul. Oh, the day is beautiful and lonely, beautiful and lonely. So flees my soul. Oh, oh!

THE YOUTH—And mine, and mine!

(Moves to her side.)

THE WIDOW—Good gracious, both my shoes are full of sand!

THE MAN-Allow me.

THE WIDOW—You can't. We haven't a shoe-horn.

THE MAN—But you can't walk with your shoes full of sand.

THE WIDOW-Well, if you're sure-

Scene III-The Club Dining-room

THE MAN-What excellent blue-fish!

THE WIDOW-Adorable bluefish!

THE MAN—Where's Louis? There he is. The best waiter I've ever had. Nobody else remembers how I take my coffee.

THE WIDOW-Without sugar? And

after your benedictine?

THE MAN—You remember—you!
. . . Or how I like my salad dressing—

THE WIDOW-Lots of oil and a very

little vinegar?

THE MAN-Mrs. Wilythorn! Ger-

(Another part of the dining-room.)

THE YOUTH—Now silverly upon the sleeping waters lies the tired moon!

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THE MAID—This is the hour of the autopsy of the day.

THE YOUTH (uncertainly)—The autopsy?

THE MAID—The autopsy. It's my own idea. Don't you think it a sweet one? It seems to me that it is the hour when the dead day is lying in state.

The Youth—How fitting! How one longs to spend one's life coining fair words to throw in Nature's lap.

THE MAID—Oh, the sweet, black night and the apparent stars!

THE YOUTH—The evident moon!
THE MAID—The incontrovertible air.
THE YOUTH—I can see the purple in the dark. Can you see the purple in the dark?

THE MAID—Yes. And I can see other purples in other darks.

THE YOUTH-My Beautiful! Lift

THE MAID—I can see you. Oh, oh!
THE YOUTH—No word need be

spoken? We need no words, my darling!

THE MAID—Be careful! The wait-

(Lights are lowered. They perceive that dinner is over and all the other guests have left the room. Consume soup, and exeunt.)

Scene IV—The Golf Course

(The WIDOW and the MAN are discovered sitting absently on a bumper.)

THE WIDOW—Best beloved, do you see that white cloud far, far up in the blue heavens?

THE MAN-Best beloved, yes!

THE WIDOW—That cloud was like my soul—alone on its perilous journey, until the blue sky of your love received it.

THE MAN—But the great, big, blue sky was very lonely without its little

cloud

THE WIDOW—And, best beloved, do you see that white sail far, far out at sea?

THE MAN—Best beloved, yes!
THE WIDOW—As lonely as that sail

has been my soul, O my heart, until it found this blessed haven!

THE MAN—Oh, happy, happy haven to have welcomed this little angel ship!
THE WIDOW—Oh, the beautiful world!

THE MAN-The beautiful world!

(Another part of the Links.)

THE YOUTH (applauding long drive of the MAID)—Magnificent!

THE MAID (panting enchantingly)— No, don't stop. Come on. We must finish before luncheon.

THE YOUTH—What a good fellow you are! You do everything well.

THE MAID (while the ball is being located)—So do you. I try to keep up.

THE YOUTH—Tell me something, dearest. When did you first know that you loved me?

THE MAID—Shall I tell you? It was when I saw you working, with your hands all oily, the day the motor broke down. What made you first love me?

THE YOUTH—Shall I tell you? Well, dear, I think it was the way you made your little brother mind.

(Indistinguishable chorus of Poets, Dead Souls and Widows.)

(CURTAIN.)



THE COMING OF NIGHT

THE last sun-glories are Into vast dimness gone; Night, busy at her dawn, Begins it with a star.

JOHN VANCE CHENEY.



A SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

THE LOVER—You see, ma and pa are opposed to me, but the girl isn't.

FRIEND—You're all right. You're going to be elected by an overwhelming minority.



CLASSIFIED

KNICKER—And was the love letter Exhibit A?

THE MAGIC FLUTE

A THRUSH is singing in the walnut tree,
The leafless walnut tree with silver boughs;
He sings old dreams long distant back to me,
He sings me back to childhood's happy house.

Oh, to be you! triumphant Voice of Gold,
Red Rose of Song above the empty bowers
Turning the withered leaves, the hopes grown cold
To springtide's good green world of growing flowers.

Might the great Change that turns the old to new Remold this clay to better blossoming,
I would be you, Great Heart, I would be you
And sing like you of Love, and Death, and Spring.

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON.

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PLACING HER

SHE—Isn't she some relation to Tom Jinks, the comedian? HE—Sure! She's his second wife once removed.



SHE'D HAVE TO STAY ALL WINTER

ELLA—I'm not going away from here until I'm engaged.
Stella—But the place isn't open the year round.



THE still, small voice of conscience would need a megaphone to attract the attention of some people.

THE BRACELET

By Demetra and Kenneth Brown

PERHAPS this story would sound less improbable were you hearing it under the conditions under which I heard it.

He was a grizzled English physician, his youth and his health left in India, who told it to me; and we were driving over the darkest roads through the blackest night during the worst of a storm ir Virginia. The rain came down in sheets at times and again was held back in the heavy clouds overhead. Now and then we would lose the road entirely and strike the forest trees, denser, not blacker, than the rest of the night. We ran up banks and among the underbrush, with its waiting showers of water, and once turned over so far that I thought my companion had fallen out. I called to him and he answered at my side, his legs swung around over the wheel so as to land on his feet if 'we completed the upset. The mare, used to rough cross-country riding, answered the touch on the rein, no matter whither it led; nor for a long while would she comprehend that we were trying to trust to her intelligence and that the restraint of the reins was merely to keep down her speed.

Under these conditions the Indian physician, with his cultivated English intonation, told me the story. When the torrent of rain came down for a few minutes he gasped for breath; when it subsided into a drizzle he took the telling up again. A lightning flash revealing a quarter of a mile of shining road before us would make our minds easy for the minute. Again the warning slaps of drooping branches, as we swerved too far to right or left, punctuated the story with shower-baths.

Perhaps, as I have said, the setting lent credibility to what he told me that night. It seems improbable enough now. My friend believed it—at least during the telling. I cannot pretend to give the local color nor the expressions in the vernacular, which added so much to its picturesqueness. But here it is as well as I am able to repeat it.

It began on a night much like this, in India, only there was more of the lurid and uncanny in the storm. The storms of India are not the studied and catalogued hydrostatic affairs of our American weather bureau. They have more of the mysterious, the terrifying. Passing over the Indian jungles, they borrow of their unknown dangers. In American storms we have flying planks. cars overturned, houses unroofed and trees uprooted-all hard, material facts. In Indian storms there is a feeling of snakes and of poison, of vampires and of tigers roaming. Imagination as well as sense is overwhelmed.

On such a night in such a storm a child lay dying in an English bungalow. Bitterly they had fought for life against the climate; but now all was at an end. Even the doctor, my friend, then a young man, had gone out of the room, had given up the fight. He saw the mother and mutely shook his head. It was not a night for giving false hope or for conventional, consoling phrases.

And the mother knew—knew that the last of her three sons, all born here in India, was lost to her; knew that henceforth her life was desolate, no matter what honors her husband might reap, what friends they might make. And she went into the room with the stiffening body of her baby and cursed her life and her God, as if she would force her child's life from Him with the ve-

hemence of her passion.

Robert, her husband, came into the room. He went up to her and would have comforted her, but she repulsed him so fiercely that he turned from her to the bed where their son Philip lay. With yearning tenderness he lifted the lifeless form in his arms, and going out into the other room, walked back and forth, back and forth with it pressed against his breast, as he would have done had it been in pain and he trying to soothe it, talking to it the while and telling it of the love he bore it. It was an unnatural night, and nothing else seemed unnatural.

Even this sight did not move Helen, the mother. She stared straight and hard-eyed in front of her now; and laughed—laughed as she thought of all her dreams when she had come a bride to India; laughed as she thought of her mother-hopes, of God when He had seemed good, of the world when it had

seemed beautiful.

The ayah of the boy Philip, an old woman from the jungle, crept softly into the sitting-room, where the father was keeping up his ceaseless walk. She waited, as an animal waits, afraid, before venturing farther. He did not see her, and moving on again, with noiseless, alert steps, the old woman crept past him, on into the other room. She spoke Helen's name, softly, once, then again and again. Over and over she repeated it in musical monotony, like the soft cathedral chime of a clock. At last she touched her arm, and Helen turned her dry, hard eyes to her.

"I know a man, a holy man, a yogi," the old woman said quietly; "I have seen him do much, when the doctors of the English could do naught. He is a holy man, a yogi, and his prayers avail. Water turns to milk, as it touches his lips, and affords him sustenance." The soft sibilant voice, on its even key, at last began to gain the attention of her mistress. "If the memsahib would go to him, and pray him

to bring back the life that is gone, even yet the Fates might be made to relent and give back the child."

Helen sprang to her feet, in her eyes a wild light of emotion that was near insanity. The servant hastened to fetch a cloak with a hood for her, and together the two women went from the house into the black, streaked storm.

It was near morning when they came back. By what means Helen had moved the yogi to come with her she never told; perhaps she did not know. Never before had he gone into the house of an Englishman, never had he thought of saving an English life. He took the child from the father's arms -the man half protesting, till he caught sight of the frantic hope in his wife's face—and sat with it alone, in the little room where it had died. At daybreak he came out, and it was as if only the husk of a man emerged, tottering feebly through the doorway, and went back to his hut in the depths of the jungle. And behind him followed the feeble wail of a child, which was to its mother's ears what nothing else on earth had ever been.

To the physician, when he saw and heard, it was one of those things that are not explained in India. The ordinary Englishman, over his brandy-andsoda, says, "Rum beggars!" when he does not understand the natives, and the phrase is as much of an explanation as has been given some things. It was a miracle to the young physician; and miracles were out of his line. The father, with easy buoyancy, thought that the child had never died. sought long for the yogi to reward him, but never found him. And Helenwhat she thought she did not say. She never forgot, and, remembering, perhaps understood a little of Philip and Philip's life.

On Philip's arm the yogi had left a bracelet of dull gold in the form of a snake, coiled lovingly around the little limb, its neck arched and the wideopen mouth pressed close against the

flesh, as if the fangs were buried deep in it. Philip's father started to take it off one day, after the boy was fully restored to health, but the mother, gentlest of wives, flew at him as if the life of her son were threatened, and Robert, good-natured, bullying Englishman though he was, accustomed to having his own way and poohpoohing women's whims, desisted. Perhaps he, too, felt a touch of superstition about the bracelet; perhaps he only wished to avoid quarreling over a little thing, if quarrel Helen would instead of submitting as usual. As for the old ayah, she regarded the bracelet with a reverence that perhaps affected the whole family.

To the touch the bracelet felt soft and yielding; the spring within it must have been of marvelous quality. The snake wound itself half a dozen times around Philip's arm, and, as he grew, accommodated itself to the growing muscles. When he was several years older Helen tried to recall just how large it had been in the beginning. It seemed to her that it still coiled as many times around the arm as it had the night the yogi left the house—as if it had grown with the growing boy. Yet that must have been mere fancy. A very little loosening of the coils would have given ample room for

growth.

The bracelet was never taken off. Even when Philip was sent "home" to school it was not touched. Once his playmates, inspired by the mischief of the young, began teasing him about it, and attempted to take it off. Philip had not answered them, but into his violet eyes had come so strange, so unearthly a look that it had influenced even their unpsychic spirits, and with curious embarrassment they turned to other things. This effect of his look was the more remarkable, since the most salient characteristic of the boy was his absolute naturalness. There was nothing of the weird and uncanny about him, as there often is in children brought up under circumstances differing from the ordinary. The very perfection of his normality

was remarkable; he did what was expected of him; he learned his lessons; he went in for the boyish sports of the school; to the ordinary observer he was the incarnation of healthy-minded naturalness. Yet there was something behind all this which no one discerned except his mother, and she rather felt it than discerned it. It was a lack of humanness in him. It was as if the ordinary springs of good and bad had been left out of him. goodness was almost that of an automaton; yet from his eyes at rare times shot the rays of a soul which denied the theories I have just been writing. From the depths of those sombre eyes there shone something that promised

what his life never fulfilled.

We often speak of our body as if it were a mere imperfect machine in which our soul is imprisoned, yet none of us can separate the strands of the physical and the psychical—hardly one of us who is not influenced by the physical aspect of our neighbors. More than that, in ourselves the soul and the body react on one another. The beautiful soul in the imperfect body-what does it do except, in a measure, transform the physical through which it works? As radium gives to objects about it its luminous quality, so the soul, after awhile, transforms the molecular arrangement of the body. Who that has lived more than the first few years of life has not seen the souls working on the bodies they inhabit, for good or for ill? Have we not seen the common in appearance growing refined and really beautiful, through their souls? And again, have we not seen the physically beautiful sink to the level of their own souls, into coarseness, hardness and commonplaceness?

Yet with Philip it was as if indeed his body and his actions were entirely unconnected with the soul that sometimes looked out of his eyes. Only in them was he different from the ordinary, well-bred, well-fed young English animal. In his eyes were strange lights and questionings. And men and women who were of the kind that understood were attracted to himsought to come near him; yet they always went away baffled, believing that they had been mistaken and that the eyes, too, were merely a physical trick aping the glances of the soul; for even the most tongue-tied of those "qui sentent leurs âmes" can at times speak what is in them, when sympathy helps them. But Philip never spoke the things his eyes looked. His soul had only one vehicle of expression, and it was too subtle alone to meet the souls of others.

To India, the land of the things that are not understood, Philip brought his wife Esther. She suited the land. She was not understood, was not understanding. She had looked into Philip's eyes, and her own had answered the question in his. Many women, some of them much older than he, had been attracted by Philip; to not one of them had he given a word of greater warmth than he gave to the rest, until Esther came. People said it was an ideal match, this tall, tawnyhaired Indian, with his violet eyes, and the slender, dusky-haired daughter of a poet and of a woman from Italy, whose dark eyes were the eyes that can suffer. And when she came to India she did suffer. Philip's mother, and his mother alone, noticed that when he passed Esther she shivered withwhat was it? Not fear-was it longing? And she saw that those lights in his eyes, which the few perceived and wondered at, and the many did not notice, seeing no farther than his actions, became more frequent, when his look fell upon his wife.

Upon an afternoon a neighbor came to visit Esther, bringing her baby, with motherly pride. From the unknown horizon a muttering storm was approaching, and when it was so near that the tree-tops began whipping the air in terror the neighbor, with her child, hurried home. When she was gone Helen came and put her arms around Esther and said to her: "Daughter mine, are you not some day going to gladden my old heart with a baby like that?"

Passionately Esther turned upon Helen, as upon a foe: "I am not his wife," she said, and her tone was hard with the hardness of long grief. "I bear the title, but I am not his wife." Then her tone changed, and flinging her arms around Helen she cried brokenly: "I love him! I love him! I would rather be his mistress than be as I am now! You know the passionate tenderness a good woman feels—you do not know the passion a bad woman can feel—I have them both for Philip, and in return—"

As she was speaking Philip came out of the door on the veranda and passing by his wife he cast on her a look—what wonder that Esther's heart and all her emotions were stirred!—a look as of an imprisoned soul seeking its deliverer. She half started after him into the storm, yet stayed herself, and

again turned to Helen.

"And the bracelet on his arm," she went on passionately. "What is it? It is as if it mocked me! Once, when first I knew him, we were playing tennis and his sleeve was rolled up, and I asked him. He did not answer me. He only looked at me; and that instant I fell in love with him. I thoughtoh, mother!—I thought that his spirit cried out to mine—that he needed me. I thought I saw his soul-that it was in bondage and I alone could free it. I am very silly. I believed in destiny, and it seemed my fate had come that I and I alone could help him. And now"—her voice sank to a pathetic whisper-"he does not need me. We have never been really married." After a pause she went on sadly: "I could bear it-could be happy, happy as most women are—if it were not for his eyes. They lash me, they goad me, they tantalize me! There is something in them that will not permit me to rest in calm—that will not allow me to forget and be quiet. They lead me on-I know I shall some day come near him!"

With heavy rolling thunder the storm and the night had come on. To both women the storm lashing the firmament was nothing to that within their breasts, so great is the human heart. They did not think of seeking more shelter than that of the veranda where they were. The fury of the elements was only a muffled echo of their heart-beats. And there, in a fitting setting to the story, Helen told Esther of that other storm when the spirit seemed to have gone out of the young body of Philip and had then been brought back to him.

"I don't know what happened that night. I don't know what power the yogi invoked. Yet always to me since Philip has been different from other children. No one else has seen it. A mother and a wife alone know it. I had hoped, when he was married—when children would come tugging at his heart-strings—" The tears came to Helen's eyes that this hope was gone. "What is it?" she cried, clasping the girl tremblingly to her. "I can do nothing. What is it he needs? You—you alone can do anything. The way he looks at you—the way you tremble at his look—""

In the lashing of the storm it seemed as if the words were swept from the lips and that the thoughts went from heart to heart without words. Esther clung to Helen, and both women clinging thus saw Philip returning out of the wild blackness. He went into the house, and as he passed again he cast upon his wife the strange compelling look he had given her in going forth. Esther caught her breath in a quick sob and her hand pressed against her heart. She trembled, as always she trembled when her husband's glance rested thus upon her. She got up and followed him into the house. But, quickly as she had followed, he had already passed into the little inner room when she was through the door; and when again she followed she found him lying on the bed, every line of his body betokening lassitude, almost somnolence. His eyes alone seemed awake, and they drew her toward him with irresistible power.

She looked at the snake coiled about his bared arm. And it, too, fascinated her, as if there were some mysterious connection between the snake and her husband. All her life seemed to be drawn into her fingers and she reached forth, for even as she loved her husband so she hated the bracelet and its mysterious, baleful influence, which seemed to her to be fighting against her love. A terrible jealousy welled up in her heart. She hated it with burning intensity. She thought of her life wasted. The pride of the woman scorned, of the wife neglected, rose and swamped every other feeling. She was half demented; and again looking into the eves of her husband in ceaseless search she saw an even newer light, which thrilled yet terrified her, as if at last the yearning question of his glance were to receive its answer; as if at last the bondage of his soul were to be cast aside—and through her.

Esther's eyes devoured those of her husband; and at the same time, as if it were unconsciously, she put forth her hand toward the snake. Philip, half smiling, moved his arm toward her, and raised his head to her, his lips to hers. And as lips clung to lips in passionate embrace, Esther's hand slipped along his arm to the bracelet, and as her lips left his she tore it from his arm almost with the fury of one

strangling a deadly enemy.

In the height of the dreadful storm, when men seek the solace of fellowmen and even the brutes cower together in fearful amity, Helen and Robert came into the little inner room. Robert carried a lamp against the blackness of the storm, and Helen clung to him in fear of she knew not what. And in the little room the murky light of the lamp fell on the form of Esther senseless on the floor, her hand clasping the bracelet of the yogi with its glittering jeweled eyes; while on the bed in waxen pallor lay the form of a little child as it had lain there years before.

THE ARISTOCRAT

WHO feels within his veins the throbbing pulse Of power and purpose urging him to dare, And, yielding to the message, treads down fear, Rending in scorn his own innate despair,

He is the nobleman! No accident
Of ancestry can equal that fine birth
Of spirit which unlocks the dormant soul
And rounds endeavor to its highest worth.

CLINTON DANGERFIELD.



A DISAGREEABLE TYPE

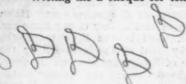
IS he a valuable member of society?"
"No. He's worth millions, but not to society."





HER MASTERPIECE

Your wife has made quite a name as an authoress. Which do you consider the best of her latest works?"
"Writing me a cheque for ten dollars."



WEARY

IRST SUBURBANITE—They say it takes three hundred years to make a lawn.

SECOND SUBURBANITE—Well, sometimes I feel as if I'd been working a

awn-mower about as long as that.

AFTER SEVEN YEARS

By N. Porter

SEVEN years!" he said thoughtfully. "Yes, it's a long time—seven years to-

His companion acquiesced, but with a soft laugh that rang out on the darkness as the tinkle of a silver bell. The period he named was, as he said, a long one; there she agreed, but rather as if in acknowledging it as such she discerned a termination essentially different from the one he did. He maintained that its very length testified to his constancy, that the fact that he was still engaged to Winnie Merryweather at the end of it signified that he still loved her. And he had never seen her in the meantime! Here it was that his present companion's laugh fitted in. How could he tell then, she asked herselfshe had even gone so far as to ask him-whether or not he still loved Winnie Merryweather?

For this was not the first time they had threshed the subject out between them. Far from it; they seemed, in fact, to have been in the process of threshing it out ever since he came on board and confided in her-the two things happened almost simultaneously; but the worst of it was that they never apparently made any progress. , She always ended in laughing, and he by telling himself that if he was not angry it was only because she showed herself too frivolous to make it worth his while. So that, this being their last night together, it was inevitable that they should set to work to thresh it out for the last time, and that at the end of two minutes she should laugh, that he should bite his lip and deem her frivo"Shall I never convince you?" he asked her presently.

"Oh, I don't know about that," she replied lightly. "Never is a long day. It is always on the cards that you might."

"We reach Plymouth tomorrow," he continued in a bolder tone. "Pendleton is only twenty miles from there, so I shall be home tomorrow afternoon. Tomorrow evening then I shall fix my wedding day."

"Shall you?"

He could feel rather than see the skeptical arching of her eyebrows.

"Yes," he said decidedly; "and we shall be married in about a week's time."

"And then you shall convince me

by bringing her to see me."

He started. This was a good enough method; of course, he could not ask for a better; but somehow or other it had never entered his calculations. He had never foreseen her and Winnie Merryweather together; he did not exactly see them now.

"And supposing—" She put her hand on the deck rail, leaned her head on it and peered up at him with a demon of mischief in her grayish green eyes. "Just supposing it should not come off; that, say, in three weeks' time you should not find yourself married, would you come and see me all the same?"

"Yes—" He hesitated, not seeing any way out of it. "Of course I shall be married, but anyhow I will come."

"Tuesday, then; Tuesday in three weeks' time." She booked it gaily and he found himself obliged to acquiesce.

Oh, yes, she was a frivolous woman;

there was no doubt about it in his eyes; meanwhile he was a little puzzled to know why she had the capacity to

make him so angry.
Seven years! Why, they two had hardly known each other that figure in weeks. She was a widow of some three years' standing and he an Englishman who had gone out to seek a fortune in the Colonies, and, unlike the rest of his kind, had succeeded in finding it. She had worn her widowhood well: it had never cost her very much. But she had never wished to change her state till the day this handsome, sulky-looking Colonial came on board.

Then, though she called him egotistical—they all were that; bumptious well, perhaps rather more than mostand self-confident to a point of stupidity, she surrendered her heart to him while all the time he prated of Winnie, the yellow-haired daughter of a parson, who waited for him in a remote village

in Devonshire.

At the start she had disliked Winnie Merryweather, but that was before she had made sure of her own powers. She was not exactly sure of them now; that was the worst of it, she could not make sure. It was all very well to dislike Winnie Merryweather, to pity her, but she found she reckoned without her own imagination. How perpetrate the robbery she intended when confronted with such a picture of a faithful, yellow-haired, weeping Winnie as her mind continued to present her with? No, it was herself, not Winnie, she had eventually come to pity. Winnie should keep her lover while she - At this point she laughed again. Surely the fate that destined him for Winnie was a little malicious, or why should he be thus permitted to dwell continually on his constancy to another woman, and that other woman be placed out of the position to read him a lesson?

"I was thinking,"—so she explained her laugh. "Things are always funny when you think about them seriously.

And she continued to smile as she noted the sulky lengthening of his upper lip, and saw that she had succeeded in annoying him more than

"Do you ever think about anything seriously?" he asked her a trifle wear-

"Sometimes," she nodded. "That's just when I find matters so delightfully

funny."

He shook his head. On the subject of a saving sense of humor he disdained to argue. Why should he? First of all, the situation required no saving, and if it had, hers was hardly the best method of saving it. No, on this last evening she was merely proving herself what he had often thought her, a mere trifler, a butterfly, and sohis eyes wandered to her shoes and stopped his train of reasoning. They were the daintiest little French kid shoes in the world and surmounted by the daintiest pair of open-work silk stockings. It was annoying, therefore, to be obliged to remember that because Winnie wore thick boots, laced and generally muddy, thick, muddy boots were preferable as footgear. Now that he had come back rich, Winnie might have as many pairs of French kid shoes as she liked; yet, according to what he knew of her, he felt sure she would not like them. Winnie had, so to speak, been brought up on the thick boots regime, just as much as the woman beside him had been taught to regard open-work stockings and Louis Quinze heels as essential to her wellbeing-they were as much part of her as the thick boots were part of Winnie. He would not have it otherwise, and yet-he sighed-the French shoes were so very pretty.

"Sighing?" she taunted him; "sighing with only one short day in front of

you?"

"I was making plans," he informed her mendaciously, and then because he was a poor liar or would not perjure himself further, he turned and asked her if she had made any.

"Lots," she answered glibly; "more than I can possibly carry out. First of all. I intend to go to Paris for a fort-

night."

'To buy clothes, of course?"

She nodded. "Could a woman have a better reason for going to Paris?"

"And when you have bought them?"
"I shall come back to England and wai—" She hesitated for a second.
"And wear them," she concluded

triumphantly.

He smiled almost tenderly. Could any man help smiling at anything so femininely foolish? She was going to spend fourteen days in Paris; a whole fortnight of her life was to be devoted to the purchase of chiffons, and again the comparison was in favor of Winnie—Winnie, who could dress for a dance in twenty minutes and make a boast of it.

"Do they count for so much?" he said after a long pause. "Your Parisian frocks and hats, I mean?"

For a moment she did not answer. Then she looked up at him with her mocking smile. "Isn't it frivolous of me?" she said, anticipating him. "But then I always told you that I was a very frivolous person, didn't I, and—?" She broke off and stifled a very obvious yawn that said clearly that she did not think it worth while to exculpate herself further. "I'm awfully sleepy tonight," she concluded irrelevantly.

She was getting bored with his company; worse still, letting him know it. She had no right to be bored, he told himself, especially on their last night together; it put him at a disadvantage. Supposing-it was an odd supposition, but he allowed it to flutter through his mind—supposing he had fallen in love with her instead of Winnie Merryweather, would she still have maintained this indifferent attitude toward him? were those grayish green eyes capable of reflecting nothing but a half hostile skepticism tempered with levity? The sleeves of her chiffon frock fluttered in the breeze, the arms they revealed were white and shapely, the fingers long and slim. Suppose he took hold of those long, slim fingers and kissed them, kissed them till the diamond rings cut and burned into her flesh, what then? His cigarette splashed down into the water and he steadied himself by holding to the deck rail. The supposition had suddenly taken the form of a temptation, a very

strong temptation.

The clock in the cabin below struck ten, and he remembered, with a start of dismay, that it was now a recognized habit that they should sit up and talk to each other till eleven. An hour more then had to be spent in her company, an hour to contemplate the mysteries of her chiffon frock, to watch the moon rise and splash its light on her crinkled, waving hair, to note the varying expressions of her petulant, half-opened mouth and reconcile them with the inconsistent hardness of her gray-green eyes! An hour! He lit another cigarette, threw away the match with a gesture of contempt and told himself that he was not afraid.

And then—well, he was not disappointed exactly, but he felt as though his heroic decision not to surrender was rather thrown away when she yawned again and told him that she did not intend to give him the chance, that she was so tremendously sleepy that there seemed nothing for it but to descend to her berth. The sparkle in her eyes belied her words; she was not in the least sleepy. Why she pretended to be was another question, which he did not inquire into. She might, for all he knew, have the audacity to tell him she was bored, and if she did—

She rose, gathered up her silken

skirts and laughed.

"I am thinking of Miss Brown," she explained. "She is watching us from over there. She will be so disappointed. Yesterday she told me she knew for a fact that you were desperately in love with me."

"And you?" For the life of him he could not help putting the question.

"Well, of course, I told her that I knew for a fact that you weren't."

"Oh!" He gasped, and he had not the slightest idea what he was going to say next, though fortunately she did not appear to think her statement required an answer. With a hasty "Good night" she disappeared down the stairway, but he could hear her soft laugh

trailing behind her.

After a little he moved his chair, and, placing it beside Miss Brown, confided in her his love for Winnie, telling her of the seven years' separation in such a way that the romantic little spinster was soon moved to tears. This was, he felt, exactly what he wanted—a testimony to his constancy.

It was three weeks later, a spring afternoon, and the sunlight played on the green art carpet in her drawing-

She wore a gray crêpe de chine frock trimmed with pale blue and turquoises. He had bought the turquoises for her at Ceylon. Everybody bought turquoises at Ceylon, so he had explained his gift, and he had shown her the larger set he was taking to Winnie. Nevertheless she had hers mounted in Paris, and, sentiment apart, they made a very pretty belt.

She had new shoes on, too, new French ones, with higher heels than she had worn on board ship and a new pair of open-work silk stockings. She had, moreover, done her hair in a new French fashion, caught up high on the top of her head, while the remaining turquoises were set in tortoise-shell

combs.

She looked at the clock and sighed. It was five minutes to four, and she knew he was nothing if not punctual. "I will give him ten minutes more," she said, "and then—then I will have tea."

But he came before the clock had

finished striking.

He was taller than she seemed to remember him, taller and sulkier-looking. It was a good sign that he should come alone and look sulky, she thought.

"So you bought the clothes!" he began, as soon as they had greeted each other, and his eyes devoured every detail of her gray frock till they fastened themselves on the turquoises in her belt and remained there.

"Yes, I had them mounted immediately," she explained. "Didn't Win-

He hesitated a moment. "No-o. Winnie didn't."

"That shows a want of proper appreciation on her part, for they are very decorative." She turned her head sideways so that he might admire the combs. "Don't you think so?"

He smiled a trifle grimly as he ad-

mitted that he did.

Then she handed him his tea, and to create a diversion suggested that he should admire her cups. "Chelsea." she said, "but they are not a quarter as good as those over the bookcase. I had to have the bookcase made on purpose to shelter them, and then"she shrugged her shoulders-"there was nothing for it but to fill it with books."

It was a very recherché collection of books, however, if a trifle incongruous, and, though she was a frivolous woman by her own confession, it was evident she had a literary friend somewhere. He also wondered who had chosen the water-colors that adorned her walls, the only solution being that she had an artistic friend, too, a solution that somehow failed to please him.

"But you didn't come here to critize cize my room," she told him after a slight pause; "you came here to talk of Winnie. Where is Winnie? I sup-pose—" for all her subtlety she could not help being direct now that it came to the point-"I suppose you are mar-

ried?"

"No, I am not," he answered gruffly;

"or, in fact, likely to be."
"Then you—" She broke off, and her heart refused to tell her whether she hoped or feared.

He raised his eyebrows in his old arrogant fashion. "I? Winnie, I may tell you, is now engaged to her father's curate, with whom she has apparently been in love for the last two

years."

It surpassed her The curate? dreams. Whatever way she had turned she had seen no room for Winnie and herself; but that Winnie should also have appreciated that fact, that Winnie should have made the sacrifice of her own free will, should have given him

up to marry her father's curate! It was impossible, inconceivable!

"I need hardly tell you how sorry I am." she answered after a moment, for, with all her contempt for conventional manners, she could not tell him just then that her heart was singing for joy.

Don't pretend," he said angrily. "You know you laughed at me on board ship; you are quite welcome to ' laugh at me now if you choose."

"Did I?" She smiled a little in the recollection, but she was quite grave and humble as she added, "Anyhow, I don't want to laugh at you now.

There was a long pause. "I want to tell you all about it," he went on at length; "that is to say, I wish you to know. When I got down there I saw it immediately, before I had been in the room with her ten minutes, and after dinner her father explained. He admitted that it was all her fault, and then he asked me, almost begged. me to let her off. Whatever I wished, I could not possibly have done otherwise, could I?"

"No." She echoed him slowly. "Whatever you wished, you could not possibly have done otherwise. And

he is a nice curate?"

"Very-as curates go. They play hockey together on Saturday afternoons in a mixed club. He says it gives him inspiration for his sermons."

"How you must envy him!"

"What?

She deliberately rearranged her cushions before she repeated her remark. "How you must envy that curate!"

"I don't see that that follows," he

growled.

"Oh, but it does," she maintained. "It wouldn't be human nature if it didn't. If you have thought of no other woman but Winnie Merryweather for seven years, it stands to reason that you must be a little envious of the man who marries her at the end of them."

He looked up, his suspicions re-

awakened. Was she daring to laugh at him now? "I didn't grudge the waiting," he said. "You know that."

"Exactly, and that is why I am so

sorry for you now."

He got up and strode toward the door. He was a fool, he told himself. To ask bread of a stone was nothing to asking sympathy of a frivolous woman. Why had he come to see her, and told her everything, when he might have known all along she was thirsting for just such an opportunity to make him look ridiculous

"Come back," she called out in her peremptory fashion; "I want to ask

you something.

He hesitated with his hand on the door, and called himself a fool a second time for his hesitation.

"You have not yet told me if you

are jealous of that curate."

The words mocked him, yet there was something in her tone that compelled him to turn to look at her, to find she was no longer seated, but had stood up to bury her face in a vase of daffodils on the mantelpiece.

"And if I am not?" . A wild impulse moved him to put the question, to recross the room, and wrenching her hands off the vase to hold them tightly between his own as he waited for her

"And if you are not-" she said softly, with a wonderful light in her

grayish green eyes.

And then he took her in his arms and kissed her, kissed her as though he had been waiting seven years for that moment alone.

"But I should have gone back and proposed to Winnie in any case," he

proposed to said as he let her go.

She nodded. "I should never have had not spoken to you again if you had not done so, only-

"Only what?" he pleaded.

"Only considering you have been in love with me for the last seven weeks, was it quite necessary to go out of your way so often to assure me that you were not?"

ARISTARCHUS

(THE MOUNTAIN IN THE MOON)

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

IT was long and long ago our love began; It is something all unmeasured by Time's span. In an era and a spot by the modern world forgot, We were lovers ere God named us maid and man.

Like the memory of music made by streams
All the beauty of that other love-life seems.
But I always thought it so, and at last I know, I know—
We were lovers in the Land of Silver Dreams!

When the moon was at the full I found the place:
Out, and out, across the seas of shining space,
On a quest that could not fail, I unfurled my Memory sail.
And cast anchor in the Bay of Love's First Grace!

At the foot of Aristarchus lies this bay.

(Oh, the wonder of that mountain far away!)

And the Land of Silver Dreams all about it shines and gleams,
Where we loved, before God fashioned night or day.

We were souls in eery bodies, made of light;
We were winged and we could speed from height to height;
And we built a nest called Hope on the sheer moon mountain slope,
Where we sat and watched new worlds wheel into sight.

And we saw this little planet known as Earth,
When the mighty Mother Chaos gave it birth;
But in love's conceit we thought all these worlds from space were brought
For no greater aim or purpose than our mirth.

And we laughed in love's abandon, and we sang
Till the echoing peaks of Aristarchus rang,
As hot-hissing comets came, and white suns burst into flame,
And a myriad worlds from out the darkness sprang.

I can show you when the moon is at its best,
Aristarchus and the spot we made our nest.
Oh, I always wondered why, when the moon was in the sky.
I was stirred with such strange longings and unrest.

And I knew the subtle beauty and the force
Of our love was never bounded by earth's course!
So with Memory's sail unfurled, I went cruising past this world
And I followed, till I traced it to its source.

A MILLION DOLLARS

By Inez Haynes Gillmore

O. I never go shopping. The reason why is a curious one, I guess you'll think, if you care enough to wait to hear about it. The beginning of the story goes back to before Mike and I were married. He had got his diploma from Harvard Medical three years before and had come to-of all places-New York to establish a practice. It was not establishing with just the speed that we desired, and as I earned, by newspaper stories, about enough to keep the wolf out of the backyard, it looked as if we'd get married just in time to celebrate our golden anniversary. I used to get awfully discouraged over the prospect, but Mike used to look at it in the most annoyingly optimistic way. He was as sure of success as of his appetite. And in the meantime we had a very good time-it's not such bad fun playing at poverty in New York, if you're young and there's a nice man about, and you're willing to have humble holidays-which was what we

Well, one fine morning I awoke to find the condition of affairs changed. It was one Saturday, I remember perfectly, and a beautiful spring day. There was one letter in my mail informing me, over the signature of my Uncle Henry's lawyer, that Uncle Henry had died and left me a million dollars. Think of it! One million dollars-one, comma, ought, ought, ought, comma, ought, ought, ought, period! Wouldn't that take your breath away? To say that I nearly dropped dead is putting it in the most delicate possible form. For a moment I couldn't move. I had all the feelings that everybody says you have when you're drowning and all your life passes like a picture before you. First, I thought I was dreaming and then I

thought I was insane.

I pinched myself and kicked myself; it didn't do any good. Then I went out and called Mike up on the phone and told him the news. Even that didn't dissipate my vision—that million dollars persisted. Mike said he'd take a day off and we'd celebrate. That's what we did, too-we spent every cent of money either of us had. I continued to be giddy. I knew the million dollars was a fact, but I was afraid I'd die young just as things were coming my way. I told Mike if he let an automobile run over me while we were crossing Broadway I'd come back and haunt him. I wouldn't take any risks that dav-I wouldn't even go up in an elevator. I remembered that my father's sister died of heart disease, and one of my mother's uncles had consumption. I made Mike thump and whack and punch me until he convinced me that I was an anatomical wonder. Incidentally, I was black and blue, but I didn't mind that.

The funny thing about it was that I had always hated Uncle Henry like fun. He was the only rich relative I had on either side. I hated him as a child, I despised him as a girl and I simply loathed him as a woman. We never came into the same room without unpleasantness. How he ever came to leave the money to me beat me, although at the time I thought he might have done it in a sudden fit of disgust with the gang of relatives, as long as the Fleischmann bread line, who were waiting for a dead man's

shoes.

The lawyer had stated in his letter that, by special request of the dead man, a cheque-book would be put at my disposal immediately. It came in the next mail. Mike was pretty busy Sunday working on his second case in two months, and so I didn't see him until night. Then I proposed that we go right out and get married. He wouldn't. First he said that you had to have licenses and things like that, and anyway, even if you hadn't, he wasn't going to marry me until he could support me in the style to which I had been accustomed—that is, a woman in once a week to do the washing. Well, I said he made me tired. and if he was going in for that sort of thing he ought to refuse to marry me at all. I said he reminded me of Laura Jean Libbey and the Bowery melodrama, but it didn't make any difference. I resorted to argumentand I tell you I'm always desperate when I descend so low as that. I tried entreaties, prayers, anger, sarcasm, smiles, tears, smiles and tears mixed, and every other female wile that I could think of. He was as incorruptible as a dead politician. I was in despair. I threatened to marry the first fortune - hunter that asked me, all to no purpose. We had the most awful quarrel we have ever had-that night the million dollars came to me. In fact, I broke the engagement and gave him back his ring.

Well, Monday came, and I decided to go downtown and spend some of the money. I didn't know what I wanted—as a matter of fact I couldn't think of a living thing, now that I had all the money there was in the world. Things that I'd had my eye on in shop windows—and my nose, too; there had been a permanent misty spot on the glass for weeks in some cases—had now no more attraction for me than

so many potatoes.

Halfway down in the car I thought suddenly of poor Marion

Tilton. She was a girl that I knew was simply crazy to go to college, and had never gone because her people couldn't afford to send her. I had always said that if I ever had a million dollars the first thing I would do would be to put Marion through college—even if she had one foot in the grave. She was one of that kind, don't you know, that is just bound to graduate with honors clinging to her degree as thick as barnacles—the kind that just naturally can't help standing at the head of their class in everything.

So I went in an automobile to her house. I told her that I had just become the female Monte Cristo of the universe—that the world was mine and I was It. And as proof thereof I intended to send her through college. Well, of course, she became crazy, too. First she said she wouldn't; then she said she couldn't; then she said, "I'll

see."

Well, the long and short of it was that we sat down and figured up the expenses of a four years' course at the most liberal possible figure. I was determined that she should be the most decorative grind that ever struck Cambridge, and I gave her the clothes allowance of a Vanderbilt. When we added it all up we went downtown and I deposited my cheque for the whole amount. When she left me to go home Marion said that, strange as it might seem, she hadn't thanked me vet because she didn't know what to say-and she was still a bit dazed. But she intended to go home and, after sleeping on the matter—that is, if she didn't wake up in a padded cellshe meant to write me a letter. I felt as happy as a grig over the whole matter until night came and Mike didn't come to see me. It was the first day I hadn't seen him in three years. I realized then that it was all really over between us, and I went to bed and cried my eyes out.

In the morning I started to go shopping again, and then suddenly it came over me how selfish it would be to spend my first money on myself, when I had the whole rest of a life-

time and a whole million—less Marion's money—to spend in riotous living. Besides, I didn't care anything about owning things by that time. I had come to the conclusion that I would retire from the world anyway and devote myself to the poor and be known as the "angel of the alley," or something like that. Every time I thought of Mike I got so blue that I seriously contemplated walking over to his office and opening my jugular

on his front steps.

The upshot of it was that I spent all Tuesday looking after an old couple that I knew and was fond of. The wife is practically a shut-in. She is really a woman of charming taste, but they are dreadfully poor and they have the same things that she started housekeeping with-old faded carpets, prehistoric white china and thin, darned table-linen. I telegraphed them that new housekeeping things were to arrive. I sent also three men down to take up the old carpets and store the furniture in the attic. Then I selected the things. I knew just what she wanted in everything-she had told me ever so many times-and I got every one of them, although it took some time to find the style of carpet she was crazy for, it having gone out of fashion about a decade ago. There were two things that I especially prided myself on. One was the dresser in her room, a lovely hand-carved white thing, and the other was the ice-chest, which was made of tiles. It was as big as a theatre and as pretty to look at. It took me two days to get the things in place, and at the end they were dying and I was dead; but we were all happy.

Now, I hate to seem to pose as a female Carnegie. I'm nothing of the sort—I'd no more give money to an institution than I'd throw it in the river. Women aren't such fools. But we all of us know a half-dozen people for whom we're simply yearning to do the right thing. Well, I got my chance in the next two or three days to do for my half-dozen, and I did for them. It was the more easy as I didn't hear a word from Mike, and I knew I

was going into a decline and might as well make my peace with the world.

Thursday and Friday I hunted out everybody I knew who needed a little help, and would accept it from me. I set up one decent lad in business-a great favorite of mine he had always been. I gave a tired business woman, an old friend of the family, money enough to go on a six months' trip in any direction she wished. Then there were a few young girls to whom I sent trinkets and materials for half a dozen ball gowns, some young mothers for whom I bought all kinds of pretty baby things, and some worn-out elderly women whom I provided with the little luxuries that they had been wanting for years. It sounds as if there were armies of them, but there were not more than a score really, although when I began to reckon I found that I had spent twenty thousand dollars. The only thing that bothered me was that many of them would persist in regarding the money I gave them in the light of loans, that they were determined to repay some time.

Friday night came and I was bluer than indigo. I had not once seen Mike. But late that night, when I was in bed, there came a special delivery letter from him. He said that he had been away on a very important case with some wealthy and influential people, and concluded: "Expect me

tomorrow."

Maybe I wasn't happy then! I I couldn't sleep-my heart sang too loud. I got up about five. I was glad that I had attended to all my debts of charity, because I hadn't one unselfish impulse left in my heart. I knew there was going to be that day an outbreak of the feminine ego that would make things hum. The first thing I did was to go to a real estate man and buy a little house on Riverside Drive that Mike and I had always wanted. The price made me gasp, but I didn't haggle. In fact, I didn't ask a single question except what it would cost. Then I telephoned to a warehouse and engaged storage room. I also telephoned the Woman's Industrial League to send an army of women to my new house to clean up and receive and place the things I was going

to send there.

Then I started downtown and I bought things, and I bought things, and I bought things! In the first place, Mike and I know the real thing when we see it. Our afternoon walks in the last three years had always ended in some one of the millions of antique places that stretch in one long, ruinous line from West Side to East Side. There were things and things that we'd had our eyes on for ages, that had never been sold, that never would be sold, we knew, because there was nobody in New York but us who had the good taste to appreciate them. I chartered an automobile for an indefinite period, and I simply bought all those things. It took the whole day easily; in fact, I didn't bother about luncheon.

I bought, during the process, all kinds of furniture—Chippendale, Sheraton, Heppelwhite, French, German and Italian. I bought pictures enough to start an amateur gallery. I bought prayer rugs that would have made even the unregenerate cave-man pray. I bought barrels and barrels of chinaold china and new china, china of every color, shape and nationality. I bought copper and brass, Tiffany glass and Dutch silver and enough Chinese, Japanese, Indian and Turkish

stuff to fill a museum.

Then I went in for things to wear. I bought muslin by the piece, silk by the roll and velvet by the bale. I bought every dress material that I had ever liked-and plenty of it. I bought a set of every kind of fur. I bought gloves, shoes and stockings enough to last one woman for a decade. In fact, I shall go silk-hosed to my grave. I bought rings and brooches and necklaces and chains, of the only sort I cared for-the queer kind-until my eyes were dazzled. I nearly cleaned out the Oriental jewelry market.

In short, I bought everything that I had ever seen or wanted. I went through the shopping district like a

ferret. I sent some things to the house and some to the warehouse. In the midst of it, impelled by a prudent impulse that I can never explain, I deposited ten thousand dollars in the bank in Mike's name. When I got home that night I was nearly a wreck, but presently Mike

came and I felt better.

The first thing he did was to put his ring back on my finger, and the first thing I did was to let him. Then I told him about what I had been doing during the week. When I told him about the first part of it tears came to his eyes and his voice grew choky, and when I told him the last part of it he nearly died of laughter. I showed him the account I had kept of my purchases that day and he added them up for me. I had spent -but of course this includes the house. you understand-two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. What do you think of that? I gasped when I heard it, but Mike howled.

While we were still talking the matter over a card was brought up to my room by my over-zealous landlady. It was Uncle Henry's lawyer's card. Mike and I went downstairs to see him. Well, I thought I was dreaming when I received his first announcement, the week before: I had no doubt that I was awake when I

received his second.

It seems that the million dollars wasn't mine at all. To go back to the beginning, I had made the remark once, in Uncle Henry's presence, that I could do as much with a million dollars in a week as I could in a lifetime. Uncle Henry remembered the remark, and while he lay dying he thought up the plan of leaving me a million dollars for a week. His lawyers were instructed not to inform me of the truth until I had had the money exactly seven days.

I was pale with horror when I explained to the legal gentleman what I had done. But he told me that Uncle Henry had explicitly stated that I was to have everything I spent until the notice was served on me, but not one

cent more. Well, perhaps you can imagine my relief. Wasn't I glad I'd done something for somebody besides myself? Wasn't I glad I'd bought that house? Wasn't I glad I'd put that ten thousand dollars in the bank in Mike's name? It was rather a grim

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joke for a dying man to play, wasn't it? But as it turned out I don't think the joke was on me exactly. It seems to be on the dozens of other nephews and nieces, among whom whatever I'd left was to be divided. But that's why I don't have to do much shopping.



LES CORBEAUX

LS rament au ciel froid, lents, bec rauque, ceil chercheur Apre à scruter les plis de la neige linceul, Patiemment, au long des hivernales heures.

Les lourds corbeaux fouilleurs, les corbeaux éternels . . .

En l'aube de demain la vierge année nouvelle Heurtera des crânes, des doigts morts sur son seuil, Des crânes aux yeux creux, louchant vers d'anciens deuils, Doigts défunts s'énervant aux loques du passé; Car au ciel d'acier froid ils planent, inlassés, Les lents corbeaux chercheurs, les corbeaux éternels . . .

Oh! j'avais fait neiger dans un ravin perdu Au défilé le plus oublié de mon cœur, Tombe d'amours défunts, tombe d'étranges heures, Les flocons opiniâtres de l'oubli chenu; Et j'avais aplani, douce pour les pieds nus De l'année vierge et de l'espérance nouvelle La voie blanche qui part de l'aube de demain.

Mais voici, ramant, lentes, au ciel froid, les ailes Des fouilleurs de tombeaux, à l'œil tenace, humain Des lourds corbeaux chercheurs, des corbeaux éternels!

ANDRÉ TRIDON.



ON THE HEIGHTS

"How much of a success has Smith made of journalism?"
"The very greatest. He is now where he can write articles advising others not to follow it."

A TOAST

LET him who will drink to his love,
Or pledge a friend in wine;
A rousing toast I'll give to thee,
O enemy of mine!

Pour forth the amber liquid; fill Your glasses to the brim; Here's to the man whose heart for me Bears naught but hatred grim!

How oft when steep ascents I climb Would I cast down my load, Did not his royal enmity My lagging footsteps goad!

So drink again! your bumpers raise
And gaily clink with me;
Here's to the man who hates me well—
Down with "Mine Enemy!"

BLANCHE GOODMAN.



VERY HARD

MY first dollar was the hardest I ever made. It"—the counterfeiter was speaking—"was so darned brittle that it broke in three pieces when I dropped it on the floor."



A POINT IN ITS FAVOR

PATIENT—But your treatment for obesity is so expensive.

Doctor—Madam, that is one of its strong points. You get worrying about the expense and it helps to work off the superfluous flesh.

THE CIGARETTE

By Theodore Waters

TANDISH could not explain the peremptory impulse that made him forsake his club early in the evening and hurry home to his wife. Usually he stayed in the clubhouse until midnight, and his early departure called forth chaffing comments from his fellow-members. He was not impelled by that domestic conscience which occasionally drives men home early from clubs. He did not possess such a monitor. Mrs. Standish was a sweet-tempered young woman, of whom her friends said that she was "too good to be neglected by a man who thought more of his club than of his wife.' But this opinion was not known to Mrs. Standish, who had voiced no complaint, nor to Standish, who did not realize his selfishness. No, this was just one of those uncontrollable impulses which take possession of us all at times, and, to do him justice, Standish did not attempt to reason it

Standish imagined his wife's surprise and wondered what she would say when he walked in upon her unexpectedly. She usually sat under the table-lamp—the lamp with the red shade that compelled a twilight glow throughout the room, except where the white rays escaped downward to her fancy work-interminable fancy work that never seemed to get finished. His mind became so full of the picture that, when he entered the sitting-room and found it silent and dark, the contrast was so sudden that he closed his eyes helplessly and seemed to feel the vision of his expectancy within his eyelids. Recovering, he walked cautiously into the darkness, and, much annoyed,

called out his wife's name querulously. There was no answer. That annoyed him all the more. Then he stumbled against a chair, sat down and began to think.

At first his thought was dull, almost characterless, in fact. But when some time elapsed and the gloom of the place began to oppress him, he became irritated. Where could she have gone? For the first time since his wedding Standish realized the integral part his wife was of his domestic life. Yesterday he would have defined home as an abode of which a wife might be the overseer. Now it had suddenly come to him that the wife and her atmosphere constituted the home, which might even exist without the abode. How very lonesome the place was without her! Where could she have gone? What could a woman want outside of her home? It was not just the thing, and he would tell her so, too. Really, she had never done this before, never. But hold! maybe she had, though. How did he know? He was seldom home before midnight, and perhaps - good heavens! - perhaps she had been making a practice of it. Well, he would wait and find out. He would put a stop to it. The tone of his thought became ominous. After fifteen minutes of waiting his attitude was grim. After thirty minutes it was threatening. After forty-five minutes it was still determined. But when the full hour had dragged by the stillness, the darkness and the luxury of the chair had coaxed his fatigue into sound sleep.

How long he slept Standish did not know. He was awakened by a feeling of intense oppression such as follows a nightmare. But his sleep had been dreamless. He was confused and the darkness helped effectually to retard the quickening of his senses. So it was perhaps a full minute before he could claim complete possession of all his faculties and a minute thereafter before he could decide that what he then saw was not one of those strange visions which come to us on the borderland of wakefulness and sleep.

In the darkness near the middle of the room he saw a round object upon which a curiously dull light seemed to be playing in the most fantastic way. Wondering what it could be, Standish looked the more intently and saw with amazement that it was a man's face slightly illuminated by the fire of a cigarette which the man was calmly smoking. There could be no doubt of it; there was the alternate brightening and darkening of the features as the tip of the cigarette went white-hot with every puff and dull red between, and finally what looked like a tiny meteor falling in the darkness when the smoker suddenly took the cigarette from his mouth and dropped his hand apparently to the arm of his chair.

Standish was startled, but he made no sound. That he had a burglar to deal with he did not doubt; a cool, selfpossessed burglar who could take his ease and smoke luxuriously in the apartment he had come to rob. He, Standish, must be careful. This came of his wife's going out while he was at the club. It would be a lesson to her. He peered into the darkness to get another view of the face, but except the very dim glow by the arm of the chair he could see nothing. He must wait until the man raised the cigarette to his lips. He wondered how he should dispose of the fellow, and supplicated fate to keep his wife away until the thing was over with. Just then he heard someone moving in another room, and presently the voice of his wife came faintly through the closed doors humming snatches of a love song. Good God! his wife had come in while he was asleep. He made ready to spring upon the burglar, who would now, he thought, attempt to fly. To his further amazement, however, the fellow made not the slightest movement of alarm.

It was coolness personified and it almost got upon Standish's nerves. Nevertheless as he gathered himself for a mighty leap he laughed silently to think of the fellow's consternation when out of the blackness rushed the invisible force that would overwhelm him. It was dangerous, too, this springing on a man in the dark. But the advantage must all be on his side, and he waited only until the man should smoke again that he might get his bearings by the light of the cigarette.

Ah, the burglar was raising it to his lips. The dull red tip went white under the first puff. The stump was evidently growing short. It lighted up its owner's face brighter than before, particularly those overhanging features—the brows, the nose and the lips—to which the glow ascended as from miniature footlights. And Standish got his bearings, but he did not spring. For in the brighter illumination he recognized the face, and the recognition filled him with a suspicion so sickening that he sank back unable to move.

It was the face of Sheldon, his former rival, his wife's schoolboy lover, who had been so devoted to her before he, Standish, had come to her and with the glamour of his worldliness won her away; Sheldon, about whom he had chaffed her many a time because the fellow had taken the thing so seriously; Sheldon, who for long would not believe he had lost her, until at last she had been compelled to bid him good-bye, gently but firmly, whereupon with boyish impetuosity he had drawn her head down suddenly to him, kissed her on the forehead and rushed away to Mexico. Standish had been amused at the deep solemnity with which she had told him of this incident, just as he had been amused at her recital of certain other schoolgirl escapades about which "she felt he had a right to know." As a man

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of the world he had patronized her innocence, accepting it as his right, as a credit to his acumen in choosing the proper kind of woman for his wife. And yet, after all his faith in her, after all her "innocence," she had been carrying on a clandestine affair with this fellow, admitting him to his apartment in his absence. Oh, the effrontery of it! Oh, the shame and the rage and the bitterness that possessed him in turn!

Yet he remained quiet, watching in the dark, trying to concentrate his scattered wits on a plan of action. This affair must be managed skilfully. Too much precipitation would spoil everything. Again he heard his wife humming the love song, and the thought that it was not meant for him almost sent him to his rival's throat. Again the cigarette moved up and down. Again it went white-hot and again he saw that face. There was no mistaking it. It was the face of Sheldon, beyond all doubt. The cigarette had burned so close to the man's lips that Standish could distinguish the expression of his face, which seemed to be one of settled apathy, even of pain. Standish did not reason out the why or the wherefore of it just then, but he noticed it particularly when Sheldon took the stump from his mouth and, turning it around until the tip pointed toward his face, looked long and deeply into its dying fire. And that expression haunted Standish long after the glow of the cigarette had died out entirely and he could no longer distinguish the form of his rival.

Standish now feared that Sheldon would light another cigarette, in which event his presence would be discovered when the match flared up. This was literally the last thing he wished to have happen, for he had an instinctive love of the melodramatic, and it was his plan to wait until his wife should come voluntarily into the room, when, without initiative on his part, these two would stand revealed face to face

in their perfidy. He waited there in the darkness for that moment with an immobility which in itself was intensely nervous.

The crackling of a match in the distant room startled him. Immediately afterward he heard his wife coming along the passage, and he knew by the light moving under the door that she was carrying the lamp. Good! It suited the situation. He would sit perfectly still and when the light swept around the edge of the opening door they would see how he had been a silent witness of it all. Then it would be his turn.

Slowly she came through the hall-way, her dress swishing softly on the carpet. Back and forth the ribands of light darted under the door in unison with the motion of her body. Shorter and shorter became their wave-length as her near approach deprived them of horizontal leeway, and then suddenly the door swung open, flooding the room with red except where a heavy beam of white light fell down from beneath the lamp-shade held high above her head, singling her out from head to foot as with the glare of a calcium.

But the color effect had no charm for Standish. He jumped to his feet and gazed around wildly, frightening his wife so that she screamed piercingly and fell fainting to the floor, the lamp crashing at her side. For, during the momentary interval when his wife had stood with the lamp uplifted, Standish had seen that Sheldon—the man with the cigarette—had vanished—that he and his wife were the only living occupants of the room.

At breakfast next morning Mrs. Standish handed her husband a telegram from Guadalajara, Mexico, announcing the death of Sheldon. Standish made no audible comment, but to himself he said nervously:

"My God! To think I was going to jump on it in the dark!"



đ

THE WELCOMING

WE were alone what time you said Your last farewell to me,
Ere yet you joined the happy dead
In their fair company.

God grant our meeting be like this In heaven's loneliest ring, Lest angels envy us the bliss Of that first welcoming!

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



IN THE NEAR FUTURE

"Yes, but very eccentric. He has never endowed a college."



GRAB HER!

A SKINGTON—Quite a clever girl, isn't she?
SAPSMITH—Clever? Why, she has brains enough for two!
"Marry her, old fellow! Marry her, as quick as you can!"



WHETHER it is a misfortune to go to the grave unsung depends somewhat on the qualifications of the singer.

ON WOMEN AND WINE

By Frank S. Arnett

HE day of the drunkard is gone. No longer has he the charity of his family, the sympathy of the night-watch or the gratitude of the cartoonist. Even a prince of the blood would now not dare, as did the Duke of Clarence, become so intoxicated as to be unable to open a ball at Windsor. It may once have been proper for the old-time country squires of Merrie England to be hauled to bed from beneath the table; and, doubtless, drunkenness agreed with the gigantic physique of the demigods. But that sort of thing means death to the nerveracked American of today. At times, it is true, we still drink in somewhat barbaric fashion. At a certain Delmonico dinner every vinted liquor ever brought to this country was served-a liquid lavishness both needless and criminal. Four wines, born in historic years, would have been perfection. Where is appreciation amid such vinous prodigality? How many of the jaded palates present could have detected a fine Madeira, bought in ante-bellum days?—if any of it still lingers in the cellars of the old families of the South. But, as a rule, no longer having sorrowful poverty to forget, and having duly celebrated prosperity's sudden shock, our men have abandoned excessive and indiscriminate drinking.

How comes it, then, that within the last few years the use of intoxicating liquors has doubled, and that now our annual bill for alcoholic drinks is considerably more than a billion dollars? There are many reasons, but one most interesting is that, while extreme indulgence is rarer among men, it has in

greater proportion grown more customary among women. The minister denouncing the intemperance he imagines has spread through all classes of society, probably knows but little more whereof he speaks than does the indignant and equally inexperienced editor denying the charge; but he happens to be much nearer the facts.

It is only within a decade or so that this could truthfully be stated. I endeavor to recall some fleeting knowledge of the feasts and follies of the ancients, and fail to find women among the bibulous. Imagination instinctively pictures the maiden of classic days as submissively engaged in filling the wine-cup of luxuriously lounging man. It is only the modern woman that, on a festal equality, clinks glasses with him. This is advantageous to both, although, when the glasses have clinked too frequently, the song sometimes dies on his lips, the woman passes from memory, and naught remains but the wine-and in the vintage of the latter he now finds he has been deceived.

Our old friend Lucius Lucullus—what would the essayists do without him?—served his guests with wine costing an equivalent of twenty dollars an ounce; but there is no record of a woman's abuse of this precious liquor. His friends held moderation to be the soul of epicureanism, of which quality there was little in the festival given by George Neville on becoming Archbishop of York, when were consumed two hundred tuns of ale and one hundred and four of wine. But even in that debauch woman had little part; nor has she been among the great his

torical gluttons. Into her brain could never have come the bestial thought of Brillat-Savarin, who, not satisfied with the grossness of his eating, demanded that he be closely surrounded by mirrors, therein to gloat over his vulgarity multiplied. It is only here in America, and at the commencement of the twentieth century, that we find woman replacing man as the

drunkard and the gormand.

The development of this appetite is gradual and almost systematic. It is not so long ago that the debutante members of New York's fashionable "dancing classes," girls of eighteen and nineteen, were content with a buffet service of chicken salad, sandwiches and lemonade. Today they would resent the absence of terrapin and champagne. An additional glass or two of wine is a temptation not easily resisted after a fatiguing waltz; and in some secluded nook it is great fun, in a spirit of bravado, to inhale a puff from one of her partner's dainty rolls of white paper. These, a powerful encouragement to the desire for drink, soon pass beyond a stealthy pleasantry; one is no longer startled at sight of a diamond-monogramed cigarette-case among the gifts to a bride.

The girl is scarcely more than out, and it is usually previous to that event, when she is introduced to Europe; and even if she is not as reckless as some that have stolen out en masque, and without parental knowledge, to watch the revelry of a bal de l'Opéra at Paris, her mother does not hesitate to guide her through the feverish atmosphere and garishness of the salle de jeu at Monaco. These are of the seemingly remote, but really forceful, causes making familiar and attractive the thought of drink, and they have had their share in arousing the appetite in older, even if equally ignorant and inexperienced, American women. On her return to this country there is the Newport season, which is scarcely synonymous with the Keeley cure; or, perhaps, if of quite another set, the new Saratoga, even more

effective than Mammon's Rhode Island paradise, because of the matter-of-course acceptance and patronage of the roulette table and race-track The annual Horse Show is next in the social program, and, if making a day of it there, a congenial two are pretty certain to have cocktails, a quart of Chablis or Brauneberger and liqueurs with luncheon; cocktails, a quart of Brut and liqueurs with dinner: and Scotch-and-soda and another bottle of Brut with supper, after the show at night. The chaperon, did you say? I've seen just one in a year, and she appeared scarcely free of swaddlingclothes.

Incidentally, the ordinary events of the girl's life tend in this same direction. When vaudeville is the customary program after a home dinner party, and the performance of an entire opera company an adjunct to a supper, when costly souvenirs are as obligatory upon a hostess as is something to eat, and when a whole forest is uprooted that it may turn the vast dining-room into the semblance of a pine wood, there is evident a condition of things that, by its grotesqueness, immensity or bizarrerie, is conducive to a willingness, if not the actual desire on the part of the girl, to take more wine than will cause merely a heightened wit and color.

At this period of her life she still listens attentively to, but takes almost too literally the meaning of, the minister's, "Although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins, yet ought we chiefly so to do when we assemble and meet together"! Not chiefly, but solely. While the perfume of the incense permeates her being, while the rustling fashionables are bowed about her, she bends brimming eyes above her prayer-book, and resolves henceforth to abstain from cocktails and all that goes with them. "From all inordinate and sinful affections; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil," comes the monotone from the pulpit. "Good Lord, deliver us," she whispers in response. And that night, at Sherry's,

she for an instant hesitates between martini and manhattan.

Perhaps even before her marriage, certainly shortly thereafter, she has become an expert on three points: First, she knows what are the right wines at the right times-where the Spanish Manzanilla belongs, where the sherry, Madeira and burgundy. Next, she has by heart the destroyers of a telltale breath-lemon peel for cocktails, celery for a mint julep, any fruit for champagne and a slice of pine-apple for straight whisky. The pineapple is not needed as yet, but it will be in time. Lastly, she is familiar with the sequence of drinks by which there is least danger of intoxication resulting.

Knowledge such as this indicates is, in a way, harmless. The housewife hostess whose modest menage does not permit a servant whose special care is the wines, but who herself understands their proper handling and serving, is a godsend; she who knows that, above all others, sparkling wines must be kept on their sides, that port should be strained through cambric, that burgundy must be decanted with careful slowness, and sherry at least an hour before using and, of all wines, served warm; she who knows that wine is not of necessity good because it is old, and whose wine-cellar does not adjoin the furnace. Once in a lifetime, too, perhaps you have been welcome in a stately, yet cozy diningroom, remindful of that of a Florentine palazzo, the logs ablaze and their light reflected on the antique sideboard at which stood a woman of witching eyes and smile, herself preparing the cocktails or pousse-cafés to be taken tête-à-tête, and accompanied by a flash or two of wit, a bit of smothered laughter and a mere hint at making love.

A taste; a sip. Upon her lip A happy languor lay. Upon her cheek there bloomed a rose Like sunrise on translucent snows; And, looking in her eyes, you thought That into her fair self she'd wrought The beauty and bouquet The flying gleams, the half-felt dreams Born of that pousse-café.

But such a woman is rare—she of charm and knowledge and the gift of comradeship. Nowadays she prefers a crowd, the eternal orchestra, the restaurant pousse-café and the cocktail of commerce. On New Year's Day, a quarter of a century ago, she and her sisters, arrayed in their newest and most fetching gowns, would have received you with cordial grace and splendid hospitality. There would have been an eggnog, famed throughout the town, and a delectable punch of which they would have taken with you just a tiny, smiling sip. Their doors no longer open on New Year's Day. The men drink instead in the gaudy cafés of the fashionable hotels. or at their clubs they drown the dreariness of the festival, and at night the women join them in the restaurants for the same old round of cham-

pagne and eatables.

Restaurant and hotel dining and supping are largely responsible for the increase of drinking among women. We have lost even the traces of all those quaint and harmless home-drinking customs that came to us from England, where, in former times on the stroke of twelve on New Year's Eve. the wassail bowl, descendant of the grace cup of the Greeks, was drunk in turn by each member of the family. When there remained to us even the family dinner, when it was still the custom for women daily to preside at their own home table with the children occasionally present, and only a few close friends, the wines, while of the best, were not abused. At rare intervals restaurants that are now no more were visited, but visited for the express purpose of dining, and the wines still remained an incident. But the glittering splendor, the dazzling lights, the gay frocks and flashing jewels, the mixture of stage and society, of bohemia and the ultra-exclusive, characteristic of our dining places of today-all this in itself intoxicates. Wine in excess seems but natural. Then, too, when the home dinner practically has been abandoned to the housekeeper, the nurse and the little ones, it is so easy to drift into the habit of, "Dear, I'm really due at Van Blank's tonight. You don't mind dining with the crowd without me?" Soon this becomes quite a matter of course, and then—well, ultimately, she doesn't mind in the least; only, there is no crowd. The advantage of its absence was appreciated by the fair and witty Lady Mary Wortley Montagu:

But when the long hours of the public are past, And we meet with champagne and chicken

at last,

May every fond pleasure that moment en-

dear,
Be banished afar both discretion and

And in the banishment of discretion rests both the charm and the danger. But whether she enters there for a supper à deux or to join a merry, because ennuyée, crowd, does she realize that through these corridors, side by side with her, sweep a score of equally beautiful and as richly gowned women who should be, if they are not, known to the house detective? And is she aware that in and out through these groups pass professional gamblers, promoters of "fake" min-ing schemes, the most vulgar and leering of the pretended "men-abouttown," and the cheap clerk who has committed some petty theft that he may come here for a few hours of an evening, and find intoxication in the perfumed passing of these haughty women, imagining himself for the moment, poor fool, of their world?

Unfortunately for her, tonight neither blood nor wealth differentiates her from women in the throng that she would despise did she know them there. For even an expert acquaintance with a proper sequence in drinks has not saved her from evil physical results. Except mentally, and that known only to herself or revealed by an unconscious slip of the tongue, the woman of experience has been able to look out for herself morally—if she has wished. But long-continued drinking shows tonight in slightly blotched

skin, in the somewhat unclear eyes, in a certain but intangible hardness and weakness alternating in her features, in a change from the former liquid voice and a cynical looseness in the

sentiments expressed.

There are, of course, women that do not go to this extreme, not even to that permitted by what I have termed the proper sequence. They have too great a love for the alluring lines of their bodies and for the clear beauty of their complexions. But even with these the amount of intoxicants taken in the course of a day is more than they themselves realize. Conditions of social life were never so artificial and unwholesome as they are now, so nerveracking as slavery or the stock market. In the seemingly trivial round of dressing, shopping, trying on, receiving and paying calls, the woman at one moment finds herself physically exhausted, at another strained to the highest nervous pitch. She is enraged by the very noises of the city. Through the day there may have been here and there a drop of cordial or cognac, but at dinner she has earned her two glasses of champagne. And so, at night, she eagerly welcomes the wine, and feels at once its resulting restfulness and content.

But, unfortunately, champagne, although the wine above all others that, taken in moderation, exhilarates and does not debase, brightens but does not make hilarious, feeds wit but not indiscretion, is, on the other hand, the wine invariably served amid those scenes that most scorn moderation. And while there is less excuse for intoxication from champagne than from any other wine, it frequently results in that condition in women, who crave it throughout all the courses of a dinner, and have lost all appreciation of the delicate bouquet and flavor of far nobler wines.

In reality the woman does not need these stimulants, although, in all honesty, she believes she does. Her actual needs are less excitement and more rest, proper food, fresh air, baths and exercise. She is a nervous wreck, and the first wrinkles have appeared. Premature age is upon her. The physician of today has a new specialty.

By now, of course, the inevitable love of whisky has come. For the whisky-loving woman is as naturally the outcome of the champagne-drinking debutante as is the divorcée that of the jilt. Even whisky, which is as much the drink of sociability as would be a nice sparkling glass of carbolic acid, has had, on poetic grounds, its advocates. The late Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll claimed that "it is the mingled souls of wheat and corn," and that "in is you will find the sunshine and shadow that chase each other over the billowy fields; the breath of June, the carol of the lark, the dews of the night, the wealth of summer, and autumn's rich content-all golden with imprisoned light."

A few men may have found these, for a brief space, in whisky. But a woman has never done so, for she has not even the redeeming power of throwing reminiscent sentiment about her drink, of whatever kind it may be. She takes it either because of sociability, because she craves the effect, or because she is still at that stage where it is pleasant to her palate. To the man, on the contrary, there is a certain romance tinging, for instance, his glass of wine, for he knows there are well-guarded secrets in its growth and in the treatment of the grape and juice. Absinthe takes him back to the Boulevard des Italiens in Paris, even though he quaff it on Clark street in Chicago; he sees in it the flowers of hyssop, the caraway of Southern France and anise brought from Andalusia in Spain. He sees in it a number of other things if he sticks to it; but the woman shares that possibility.

For her, however, is no carol of lark, no rich content nor breath of June in association with whisky. In time it brings about the final stage, when she realizes that she is intoxicated and wishes to remain so. Strangely enough, while she has no remembrance of the physical and mental suffering involved

in recovering from this condition, however often she may have undergone it, she will refuse anything that will bring such a recovery about. The moment a glimmering of absolute sobriety reaches her she will resort to any subterfuge to obtain more of the poison that deadens.

The women of the Anglo-Saxon race, and usually its most brilliant and cultured women, are almost alone in knowing the longing for drunkenness for its own sake. Those of France are familiar with the unique intoxication of an hour, perhaps, when at five o'clock each day Paris gathers-or once gathered, for there are sad rumors of a Teutonic invasion-about the tables stretching for nearly three miles along the sidewalks of the inner boulevards, and all the world seems intent upon a brief space of the illusion, inspiration and enthusiasm concealed in the sluggish greenness of the glass of absinthe. Here is some excuse for the drinker: the boulevards gay with smart equipages, with flowers and fine frocks and smiling faces. But the Parisienne, who half the time takes nothing but sugared water, would stand aghast at the American woman's solitary vice of whisky drinking. The use of absinthe, it is true, tends naturally to that of drugs, such as morphine, and the fashionable women of Paris lead the world as morphinomaniacs. But even in this there is nothing of necessity repulsive, it having been truthfully said that there are but three stages in such a career, "poetry, ecstasy and con-sumption"! The method of the American woman is less picturesque. Even in the midst of efforts at reform, she of the bluest blood has a nostalgie de la boue as fierce and as uncontrollable as though she had been born in the slums.

As we grow older, if we have known intimately life's many phases, we are more prone to forgive, more willing to forget, less capable of becoming indignant at outrages, less likely to imagine, or even to resent, an insult. "La vie est brève!" we say, with a shrug of the shoulder—

La vie est brève; Un peu d'amour, Un peu du rève, Et puis—bon jour!

La vie est vaine; Un peu d'espoir, Un peu de haine, Et puis—bon soir!

Therefore it is, perhaps, that I have some sympathy for the woman in the divorce court whose name is coupled with that of but a single co-respondent—a cur, in all likelihood, but one to whom it may be she has given the first and last real love of her life. When her name is associated with a half-dozen I am certain the woman is a drunkard, her moral nature lower than that of the outcast of the streets. That, in a nutshell, tells the result of excessive drinking among women—the loss of self-respect.

There are those who will say, "But all this is true only of the fast circles of the millionaire set." Their example may have been influential, but pray do not imagine that all those you see in the fashionable New York restaurants are of the Fifth avenue crowd and owners of cottages at Newport. Nor are they all theatrical stars and popular "show girls." Many are occupants of conventional fifty-dollar upper West Side flats, furnished on the instalment plan, or of homes not yet paid for in the suburbs.

It is well known that the stage almost invariably proves the temporary and hopeless refuge of the drink-discredited woman of society. She finds, unfortunately, she has but leaped from the frying-pan to the fire. The stage, which in itself has never caused a woman's tarnished name, is also cursed by drink; not, of necessity,

absolute drunkenness, but the excessive drinking that makes poisonous the road tour's obligatory breaking down of conventionalities.

I had intended that all this should be written in a tone of gentle raillery; I had meant to dwell on the poetry of drink, on the joyousness of the traditional trinity of wine, woman and song. on the innocent bond of jollity and camaraderie the cup has established between men and women. But it cannot be treated in that fashionnot, at least, in honesty and by one who knows whereof he writes. No man that has closely touched this phase of woman's life, social and theatrical, no man that has known a hundred instances where, night after night, fame and fortune were seen dancing in the diamonds of the wine, and in the morning were found stretched lifeless in the dregs of the glass, can calmly sit down and write of the poetry of the . thing. He can talk it, he can live it and lie it, but he cannot commit the literary hypocrisy of putting it in sturdy type.

I—and you, perhaps?—who drink, to whom the sparkle of wine and the gaiety of honest laughter, the bright eyes of women and the good-fellowship of men have always been dear who loathe the fanatical and oppose the prohibitive, despite all this know full well that on the stage and in society, in Fifth avenue and in the lowest tenement, woman has no blacker bane. Why? Because it quenches laughter and stabs good-fellowship, stifles ambition and destroys intellect? No, not because of these, but because it is the death of love, without

which life is nothing.

10

VERY LIKELY

SUBBUBS—Why don't you run down our way with your auto?

CHAFFER—Guess I'll have to. It's the only thing I haven't run down.

THE END OF THE STORY

By Emma Wolf

A ND that is all?"

The end was not far distant."

"How can you tell that?"

"By the air of climax pervading everything—everybody. He—the hero—is fast succumbing to the intense strain. To prolong the suspense would be inartistic—detrimental to the reader's sympathy—the sharp power of the story's interest."

'Then you think it-?"

"I think that, unfinished—as it stands—it is remarkable, more for its magnetic style than for the story. I can't say just what it is, but had she finished it I have no doubt it would have made Miss Locke's fame and—"

"That's all she would have asked. Her one ambition was to obtain recognition through a long story, a novel. She realized perfectly the ephemeral nature of the things she wrote for your magazine and the others. But the sustained effort was too much for her frail frame; she broke down under it, as you know."

"And death ended it."

"As you see."

Poynter poked up the glowing log

with his toe.

"I fully appreciate the sacredness of your confidence in reading the story to me," he said quietly, addressing the flames, "and I confess I hesitate over what I am strangely eager to say."

"I wish you would say it," urged

young Locke curiously.

"I was interested in Winifred Locke, your sister," began the editor in a musing tone, "more as a personality than as a woman who writes. For before this "—his eyes swept the manuscript upon the table—"she was little more, editorially speaking."

"I believe all her life is in this,"

said her brother bitterly.

"Yes; this seems to have been the beginning of power—and the end."

He picked up the poker absently, thrusting it into the glowing wood, watching the embers hiss and separate and crackle into flame. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, the iron clattering from his hand to the bricks.

"My God, Locke, what is the end?"
He turned a pale, disordered face upon
the boy who looked up at him, stupe-

fied by the abrupt assault.

"The end?" he stammered as if asked to unravel something unthought of

Poynter turned impatiently from him and strode across the room. At the farther end he faced about, seem-

ingly composed.

"I was thinking of the story," he explained more calmly, with an effort toward a smile at sight of the young fellow's consternation. "It interests me more than I can make clear to you." He came back and seated himself opposite his guest. "Your sister and I had several conversations together," he went on, in further explanation. "She was very—what the sentimentalists call—sympathetic."

"Yes?" breathed Locke question-

ngly.

"It was a comfort to talk to her; she responded as flint to steel."

"Yes," supplied Locke, in the pause.
"One day I told her, in outline, the life story of—someone I knew."

"Yes," repeated the boy absorbedly.

"The main points—the principals of that story are embodied—there."

Again his eyes embraced the manu-

script upon the table.

"You mean," faltered Locke, vaguely, "you mean Win—cribbed it——?"

"No, no," the man refuted sharply.
"It was creative material to her, and

so her own; but---

"But," Willis Locke cut in, his eyes drawn close in suspicion, "you think that, considering your contribution toward the plot, you ought to have——?"

He stopped short, quelled by the ironic amusement in the other's face. "I beg your pardon," he stammered,

with a blush.

"Well—rather," commented Poynter laconically. "Better let me come to the point without any further interruptive inspirations. I was about to say that, because of the peculiar interest I take in the story—and from no mercenary motive whatsoever—I would ask you to let me try to finish it."

"You think you have the clue?"

cried Locke eagerly.

"Far from it. But I want you to

give me the right to find it."

The boy hesitated over the responsibility, glancing down at the helpless sheets. He was unaccountably moved by Poynter's extreme, yet controlled, earnestness.

"Understand," Poynter continued quietly, "I shall offer no version which does not satisfy me as being just what she had in mind. When it is once completed the entire work shall be hers—yours by inheritance."

"But why—why do you undertake so gratuitous, so disinterested a task?"

"In a manner incomprehensible to you, the work will not be disinterested. If you grant me the favor I shall regard it as a trust—sacred to her memory."

The tears sprang to Willis's eyes. "I thank you," he said unsteadily, "although I don't quite understand. But, somehow, I believe Winifred

would have it so." He passed him

the packet.

Poynter took it with reverential hand. "If by the end of four months I have made no headway I shall return it to you," he said. "You say there were no notes pertinent to the story among her effects?"

"None. My sister, Mrs. Chalmers, and myself have searched indefatigably and found no trace of a note of any description. It was a habit of hers never to jot things down—she always maintained it hampered natural sequence."

"And she died in California?"
"Yes — in Pasadena. She had a
hemorrhage while traveling there from
Santa Barbara. The end came two

days later."

"You went to Pasadena?"

"Yes. I brought away—everything."
"Did you question anybody?"
"About her work? No. We didn't

know at the time."

"How long did she stay in Santa

Barbara?"
"Not longer than a day or two, I should think. She stopped over only

to see the Mission."
"And where do you suppose she

stopped while there?"

"No doubt at the best hotel. But we did not inquire."

"And it all happened—just when?"
"A year ago next month—June."
"Thank you. I am asking these

questions because I think I may take a run out there—go over that ground before setting my wits a wildgoose chase."

"Detective work?" smiled the lad sadly, rising to go.

"Secret service," said Poynter in his usual noncommittal tone, taking his extended hand.

"I will send you any addresses of California friends I find. I don't know what to say; I think I have done right. I thank you—but please, please remember——"

"My dear boy, I am staking a large share of my twn peace of mind on this—dénouement. And I have promised to return it at the end of four months if I gather no light, you know." With this proviso established young Locke took his departure.

When Poynter returned to the library he rang the bell for his servant.

"Briggs," he said when that general factorum appeared, "I shall be late tonight. Don't wait up—I'll make the house fast."

"Eleven nights running, sir," murmured the man, straightening the chairs.

"Are you my timekeeper as well as my housekeeper? Tell me, Briggs, how much of his own soul may a man claim for himself?" He spoke genially, adjusting the shade of the drop-light the while.

The man lingered. "It all depends, sir, on his obligations—social or fam-

Poynter stared in amazement, but the next instant his face settled into its habitual gravity. "I have no obligations—of any sort," he said bluntly. "Good night."

Briggs threw a fresh log on the flames and left the room.

Poynter sat down before the table. His hand still held Winifred Locke's unfinished story.

"How she grasped it!" he mused. "How it must have grasped her! And she has idealized—everything." A gentleness stole over his face, softening oddly the sternness of the dark young features. And then, "She knew," came the corollary, and a flood of color mounted slowly from his chin to his brow.

A vision of the girl's vivid, sensitive face arose before him in all its eager sympathy while she listened. And yet—the answer. Had she, highly sensitized as she was, the intuitive power which told her in one clairvoyant flash the truth which had eluded him all his life? Had she wished in her sweet young sympathy to complete the message—thus—to him, only to be frustrated by death?

The intensity of his thought enfolded him in an infinite isolation; his surroundings faded from his perceptions; unconsciously his hand had slipped the elastics confining the manuscript; unconsciously, as if looking into his own soul, he was reading.

The tale, in its changed English setting, baldly told, robbed of its psychic insight into the character and life of the hero from childhood to manhood, shorn of its pensive grace of style, its gripping humanity, is this:

In the depths of a winter night a lady, young, beautiful and richly dressed, rang the front doorbell of a hotel in an obscure seaside resort and asked for accommodations. Unprepared for guests, astounded at the request at that season, the proprietor, a certain Barker, was about to refuse, but his good wife, struck by a nameless nobility and sadness in the appearance of the girl-for she was little more-interposed, and suggested that if the lady could put up with homely fare they might accommodate her for awhile. Of course the rates were lower at that time of year.

The lady instantly drew forth her purse. "Whatever you may ask I can pay," she said. Barker, mollified, pushed the great book toward her and asked her to register.

She drew off her glove, disclosing a delicate white hand marked by a single gold band, a wedding ring—badge of respectability—which drew Mrs. Barker nearer to her. She wrote distinctly and steadily, "Mrs. Geoffrey Hall."

"You're tired," said Mrs. Barker in her motherly way, "and hungry." Then she stopped, for at the kindly voice the lady suddenly put forth her hands blindly, as if in appeal. Mrs. Barker took them in hers.

Before the week was over she had confided to the good woman that in the spring she would become a mother. In the warmth of the tenderness which greeted this announcement she then confessed that the name "Hall" had been assumed, that for cogent reasons her real name was too prominent to disclose. As was evident, she said, she was in trouble; while on a yachting tour with her husband and several guests his—her husband's—

conduct had been so openly scandalous and he had treated her protestations so cruelly that, after a violent quarrel, in a fit of desperation she had left him. No doubt he, continuing his tour, thought she had fled to her parents, who, in turn, believed her with her husband. That was why she received no letters. "I want to frighten him—teach him," said the young wife sternly. "But when my baby is born I'll go back."

The Barkers, father, mother, sons, became her loving slaves. And in the spring her son was born. He was a beautiful boy, like his mother, and as winning. The Barkers fell down in a body and worshiped him. The young mother was delicate, and an experienced nurse was provided. She, too, joined the band of baby-worshipers.

One day, when the child was a month old, Mrs. Hall went to visit the local bank. She never returned.

Toward nightfall the following letter was received:

DEAR, GOOD MRS. BARKER:

Except that my birth is noble, the whole tale was a fabrication. My child is the child of shame. I bought the ring. You love him. Keep him. I have provided abundantly for his care and needs. The monthly interest on a sum deposited in your bank will reach you regularly. When he is of age let him come into the fortune there deposited and deliver to him the inclosed letter. It contains a charge. It contains also all the grief and despair of his

MOTHER.

The Barkers stood entrapped, enraged. The baby cried. They rushed

to comfort him.

The boy throve. When he was old enough to understand they told him that his parents were dead and had left him to their care. He remained with them. He was never of them. It was a peculiarity of his that he never mourned his mother, but even in his sleep he was known to murmur "father." They never knew that while he trotted about the grounds after Will or Harry Barker he played a silent game all by himself—he "made believe" young Barker was his father and called him so in his little heart. He was a lonely child with a

wistful face yet reticent spirit. He was unhappy at school, and a tutor was found. He traveled. He refused to study and discharged the tutor. He said he would have a "man" who

would "let him alone."

"I will be your man," said the tutor, Breen, following the example of all who came into intimate contact with him, loving him beyond reason, and hoping to recover his pupil in short time. Geoffrey laughed at the offer, but he could bully the man and he thought it would not last long. It lasted for many years. The "man" often turned nurse, Geoffrey's health giving out; and they finally went home to the Barkers.

When he was twenty-one they gave him his mother's letter. It was a wild plea for forgiveness. She told her name—she was the daughter of a baronet and statesman. She charged him never to divulge it. Without further explanation she also charged him to find his father. When he came to this point Geoffrey laughed, a laugh

very much like a sob.

He called Breen to him. "Breen," he said, "I want you to go to Fulham and find out what has become of my mother—Gwendolen, daughter of Sir Christopher Blount."

The man looked at him, stunned.
"Don't stare," cried the youth;
"go!"

Breen never asked questions; he went.

He returned two days later with the information that Gwendolen Blount, or, rather, Mrs. Cecil Gordon—at the age of twenty-three she had married Captain Cecil Gordon of the Royal Engineers—was dead. She had died in childbirth eighteen years agone.

"Good!" said her son nonchalantly.
"And the son—or daughter?"

"Died at birth."

"Good!" said Geoffrey again.

"You do not ask for your father," suggested Breen delicately.

"My father? Ah, Breen, that is the question. Who is my father?"

"Why, Captain Gordon—"
"Stuff, man! Don't you under-

stand that that personage appeared on the scene only after the event, or, rather, mishap-myself? However, who can tell? Tomorrow my life-quest begins. I go to seek my father. I shall find him."

"Sir, he may be dead."

"I know he lives." He lifted his proud, delicately beautiful face illumined by the fanatic faith which was to lead them on for many weary years.

Undeterred by apparently insurmountable difficulties, he began his work in the dark, always keeping Gwendolen Blount's name untouched, following obscure clues, romantic possibilities, grotesque improbabilities, leaving no thread untraced, undaunted by failure, impervious to the delights of youth, the demands of ill health, the allurements of rest.

Once only love touched him. He paused long enough to say, "After the task decreed-then you. Wait for me.'

So, on. There were three names forever mocking him-Leroy Bellairs, his mother's cousin and the father of the girl he loved; Hugh Dorset, a musician; Fergus Marvin, her brother's chum. He clung to them tenaciously, digging unobserved, unsuspected, into their most secret histories. Two of them he had met; Dorset alone seemed to elude him. And it was this Dorset, with his fame of personal fascination, who finally obsessed him, overshadowing all other suspicions.

"There was no woman could resist him," said the old innkeeper, telling the story of how "the quality," overtaken once by a snowstorm, had honored his humble hostelry overnight. "When once he choosed to set them eyes o' his onto you-eyes, begging your pardon, sir, and face, too, for all the world like your own-not even Miss Gwennie Blount, proud as a duchess though she were, could keep her cheek

from going red and white."

This, with all the nameless nothings, clinched decision, and it was in the room of a hotel in a New England university town that the final scene of the written story was enacted.

The following is a transcription of the last pages:

He veered round from the window as Breen entered, a white, eager light

upon his ethereal face.
"Well, Breen?" The question hurtled through the silence, yet was scarcely articu-

late.
"It was easy—finding him—after all we'd heard."

"Ye-es?" The word shook in hysterical joy, his hands clenched, his slight frame

swayed.
"Won't you sit down, sir? You—
for God's sake— "Breen-quick, for God's sake-where?"

A slight pause.
"Sir, in the cemetery—dead."

Geoffrey faced his informant in deathly silence. Then he threw back his head, seating himself and laughing oddly. "Dead, you say? Then he was not my father?"
"Sir," ventured Breen, "that, in all com-

satisfied with this silent dictum, accepting—" He paused, startled by Geoffrey's slow rises to his feet and facing him in quivalent consists and satisfied by Geoffrey's slow rises consists and facing him in quivalent consists and satisfied by Geoffrey's slow rises and satisfied by Geoffrey rises and satisfied by

ering passion.

"Breen, once and forever, end that argument. As I am a living man, I know that I shall yet stand face to face with him. Do you hear? I—but, oh, God! how long? how long?" He sank back into his chair, covering his face with his hands, sobbing heavily. It was the first time he had broken down, and Breen, shocked, laid a hand upon his shoulder.

"Mr. Geoffrey, you are undone, ill. Let

me call a doctor."
"Doctor!" He raised a lined, tearless face, sneering into the grave concern of his faithful adherent. "Why, man, what for? Can a doctor give me my father? Can a doctor drive this-this madness from my brain? Breen, Breen! Am I mad?"
"Oh, my dear sir, calm yourself. Let it

go. Think. Suppose you do find him, to

your sorrow-your shame!"

"Sorrow—shame! If he were standing on the gallows, if he were the lowest sot in the mire, if he were an outcast, a leperyet I would have seen him—have claimed him for my own." His slender frame shook with the intensity of fanaticism as he gripped the arms of his chair.

"Alas," murmured Breen, pale and distracted, "this is beyond reason—it is mania."
"Mania—yes!" His eyes blazed up at

him. "Oh, you who have watched me hungering, starving from my youth, you—you—don't you understand that it is the mania of love? Don't you know that it is my blood crying out to belong to someone—to belong to someone!" He crushed his face into the pillow, weeping at last like a child.

It was a moment for privacy. stole from the room, closing the door softly

behind him.

Poynter's head fell forward to his arms clasped upon the table; he was unconscious that he, too, was weeping. He wept himself asleep.

Briggs found him there in the gray dawn. He roused him, scolding in-

cessantly.

Poynter sat up, dazed. "Yes, Breen—Briggs, I mean. We'll find him," he murmured, rising sleepily. "Sir?"

"Oh—guess I'm dreaming. Fell asleep here, didn't I? Yes, I'm going upstairs. And, by the way, Briggs, I shall leave for the West tonight. You can follow in a day or two."

II

THE evening was calm and beautiful, and, after dining at the hotel, Poynter decided to stroll up to Winston Hill. It would be a pleasure to see the dear old place and have a chat with Mrs. Winston again. The languorous Santa Barbara air, soft as the touch of a rose, made the old Spanish proverbial "manana"-tomorrow-not only intelligible there but pardonable. The sinking sun had touched the distant, undulating mountains to a rosy effulgence, and the town, nestling in its trees and flowers as in an arm curved against the kiss of the amorous blue sea, seemed resting under a spell of enchantment.

Poynter, his head held high, inhaled the fragrant air with rapture. Winston Hill would be all a poet could ask at this hour. He ascended the slow, winding road, let down the bars of the gate, and found himself upon the broad mesa, or plateau, overlooking the sea, which was the ancestral domain, the dwelling-place of his friend, Elbert Winston. He entered the stately pine grove, his feet sinking noiselessly into the thick carpet of needles, his eyes glimpsing the jewel of ocean through the trees. Upon the whitened cliffs the tide beat a diapason, grandly sonorous, bearing in its monotony a sense

of wide peace.

When Poynter reluctantly turned to retrace his steps toward the house something in its aspect struck him as unfamiliar, and, walking at a quickened pace, he came up the terraced lawns, noting, with a pang, that all the blinds were down; the house looked deserted. He stood still in disappointment, but a step upon the gravel caused him to turn promptly.

"Why, Con," he exclaimed gladly,

"Why, Con," he exclaimed gladly, going forward in recognition of the old gardener, "it looks as if you were the only living creature on the place."

"That's about it, Mr. Edward," said the old retainer, removing his pipe from his mouth and putting his hand into the extended one of his master's friend. "Glad to see you, though. Going to make a stay? Where's your baggage, sir?"

"Where's the family?"

"Oh, they're in Europe this many a day. Why didn't you telegraph, sir?"
"I haven't come to stay—I'm over at the hotel. When did they leave?"
"I set I have a sample of the sample of the

"Last June—somewheres toward the end of the month."

"Suddenly?"

The man peered curiously up at him in the gathering gloom. "Well, yes," he said slowly. "You might say as it was kind o' sudden."

"All well?"

"Not exactly. Mr. Harold, he was

kind o' poorly.

"But where on earth could they find a better place for the boy than this?" questioned Poynter, gazing in admiration about him. "Con," he exclaimed eagerly, "is the house open?"

"Here's the keys, sir." He drew them from his pocket. "Every room aired, and dusted, and freshened every morning against their coming home

unexpected."

"Well, come along. I've a mind to go through it all again—the library, and the tapestry-room upstairs, and—"

"Take the keys, Mr. Edward. Begging your pardon, sir, but I've lamed my leg and can't go up the stairs. I sleep in the lodge over yon. But you go on, sir; the electric lights is all in order, and you just make yourself to home."

"All right, I will. Where shall I

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find you when I come back?"

"Hereabouts. I'll be smoking my

nine '

He ran lightly up the stone steps and entered the picturesque hall with its broad, winding staircase and overlooking gallery. The place breathed home into him in a manner so unexpected, so alluring, that for a moment he paused as if listening. "Seems like an inaudible invitation to stay," he thought whimsically, opening the door of the library.

He found the button, and instantly the great Gothic room was flooded with light. He gazed about him delightedly, recognizing the inviting book-shelves, the organ, the many details reminis-

cent of pleasant hours.

His eye was finally held by a missallike volume resting quite alone upon the massive table near him. He approached and idly turned over the stiff yellow parchment leaves. On the instant he was caught, as in a net, by the medieval foreshadowing of the alchemist, the alkahest of Paracelsus. He seated himself absently, forgetting time and place in the fascination of a study over which he and Winston had had many a tilt. Only the striking of a clock from some distant room caused him to start, reminding him of the man waiting outside. With a laugh of contrition, and leaving the book open, he went hastily out to find him.

"Con," he called softly through the

still evening air, "Con!"

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"All right, sir," came the response a

few yards away; "I'm coming."

"I'm not going yet, my man," he explained. "There's a book in there that promises to keep me for two or three hours yet. I may fall asleep over it, but—you won't worry? I'll return the keys all right."

"Sure, Mr. Edward. As long as you want. But ain't it kind o' lonesome?"
"Lonesome!—not a whit. I'll find

"Lonesome!—not a whit. I'll find you in the lodge, eh? Well, so long."

He returned to the library and resumed his absorbing reading.

It may have been only an hour, it may have been two, when he suddenly looked up.

"This sort of thing goes to the

brain," he thought, coming back to the electric-lighted present with an effort. He rose to his feet, closing the book lingeringly, yet realizing his fatigue as he turned off the light and left the room.

In the hall he paused irresolutely, looking up at the encircling gallery. "By Jove!" he thought, "I must have another look at that beautiful tapestry-room with its jutting window."

He sprang up the stairs in a few long-legged leaps, turning to the right toward the room of endeared memory.

On the threshold he stood enthralled. The room was flooded in moonlight, and, facing him through the deep circular bay-window, gleamed the infinite sea, touched to glory by the gold of the moon. It was like a phantasm, a dream, and Poynter, compelled by the beauty before him, seated himself absently in the cushioned chair standing between the room proper and the broad, recessed window-place. lace curtains, drawn aside, hung in folds as of heavy yellow silk, so enriched were they by the mystic glow; the tapestry couch stretching across one-half the window space, bathed in the mellow splendor, seemed awaiting some romantic episode. The fauns and satyrs on the tapestry panels at the side played fantastically in the glooming.

A touch of unaccountable sadness stole over him—or was it only a strange weariness? He closed his eyes. The fauns and satyrs, human, non-human, tiptoeing gaily toward the knowledge and sorrow of man, played on in the moonlight. A heaviness of despair—or was it utter weariness?—weighted him.

A low, deep sigh moaned through the silence. He sat motionless—listening.

Strange! The sound had come from just before him. He could have sworn that, by putting out his hand, there, toward the couch— Ah, heaven! through the moonlight it stole again, breaking now into deep, disconsolate sobbing. He put out a wild, pitying hand. Nay! what was it?—the blurred mumbling—the voice—voices—speech without body—here, about

him, upon him, beating into his being

-pinioning him-

Ah! How he arrived there he never knew, but he was out in the night, rushing toward the lodge.

"Yes, sir. I heard you—I'm here! Feel me. It's Con all right, sir."

The man drew him into the lamplighted room, holding him with shaking hand while he led him to a chair.

Poynter was laughing foolishly. He put his hand before his shocked, pallid face, while Con proffered him a glass

of whisky.

"I fell asleep, Con," he explained when the warmth of the liquor, the light, the human presence near him, had restored his self-control, "and I had a most horrible dream—at least, I think it was a dream." He shuddered through his puzzled smile.

"In the library, Mr. Edward?"
Poynter looked up in surprise at
the man's shaken voice. Con's face
was hideously a-grin with fright.

"Why, no," returned Poynter slowy. "It was in the tapestry—"

ly. "Ha-ha!"

The mad sound from the man gave Poynter a start. "What does this mean?" he demanded sternly.

"Begging your pardon, sir," whimpered Con, "I couldn't help it, sir. But oh, will you tell what it was you dreamt?"

"I didn't dream it," said Poynter deliberately. "I heard it—heard it with my waking ears as—."

"For God's sake, sir, don't!" The man had caught his sleeve. "I mean, sir—what did you hear?"

"A voice," said Poynter in a low tone, eying the trembling man curiously; "voices—talk without words—and a weeping in the room, just——"

"Yes, sir, I know—I know! You wasn't dreaming, Mr. Edward."

"What do you know?" he ques-

tioned sharply.

"Mr. Harold, sir," the man began in a whisper, "he went stark, staring crazy over it, and the next night Miss Lucy Shreve slept there and ran shrieking into Mrs. Winston's room crying, 'Words—words without any faces.' Them were her words, sir, 'without any faces.'"

"Go on," said Poynter, pitying the man's white-lipped terror, but determined to solve the strange occurrence.

"And then—Mr. Winston and Mrs. sat up there together the next night, not believing a word of it. And the next day, sir, they left for Europe."

"When did this happen?"

"Nigh a year ago now. Mr. Harold was just home for his vacation."

"And who had occupied the room before?"

"The writing lady."

"Who?"

"The writing lady-Miss Winifred

Locke, sir."

Poynter, ashamed of his thumping heart, picked up the half empty glass and swallowed the whisky at a gulp. He found it necessary to clear his throat before speaking.

"How long did Miss Locke occupy

the room?" he asked.

"Most a week. She was took sick at the hotel and Mrs. Winston knew her and brought her here. She died at Pasadena two days after she left."

"Tell me about her stay here."
"She was a sweet young lady, sir."
"Yes, I know. I knew her."

"She used to lay under the pines and say they was the mothers of the forest because they sang real lullabies; and the flowers—she kind o' loved the flowers. The poinsettias she said was dusky Indian maidens—and—"

"Was she much in the room?" "At sunset, sir, she laid down on the couch to watch it at sea. She told me so-she kind o' liked to talk to me-I don't know why-and she says to me one morning under the pines, 'I'm at sunset myself, Con, and at sea tooabout the end of my story. I'm in sight of land, yet I can't strike it. But I'm hoping to arrive every night,' she says. And every day she says, kind o' sad, 'I haven't arrived yet, Con.' And the morning she left, says I, meaning to make her smile because she looked kind o' white and wan, 'Did you touch land last night, miss?' And Mr. Edward, I wish you could 'a' seen her

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face-eager-like, and glad, but softlike, like daybreak over them mounta'ns, sir, and, 'Oh, Con,' she cries out, '1 did. And tomorrow, please God, I'll be strong enough to write it.' But she never was, poor lady. She had a hemridge on the cars, and that's all we know, sir. But ever since there's been that in the room-that!"

Poynter sat leaning forward in a listening attitude, his eyes fastened on the floor, his hands grasping his knees.

Could there be such a thing as disembodied thought? Had emotion, deep as life, agonizing as death-entity? Could thought-such intensity of thought as Winifred Locke's-haunt? Could-

He sprang to his feet. "Con," he said hoarsely, clutching the man's arm, "I intend to sleep in the tapestry-room tomorrow night."

But in the clear, laughing light of the next morning he said, "Bosh!"-not to the reality of the sound he had heard, but to the wild rush of conjecture and mystic conclusions which had overwhelmed him the night before.

That he, Edward Poynter, agnostic, positivist, could in his agitation have regarded the phenomenon as a "super"natural manifestation appeared to him now an absurdity, a momentary mental aberration. No doubt some defect in the building, a flapping shingle, a loosened stone, a breakage, a leak, in conjunction with the muffled roar of ocean, the whispering pines, or whatever adjacent agent, had occasioned the acoustic display. That the Winstons had connected it with the death of its late occupant, running from it as from a ghost-haunted spot, was comprehensible enough. That he, for a space, after hearing the facts, had done likewise he attributed to his tired brain, over-excited by the coincidence of her connection with the soundhaunted room and the object of his visit to the town.

Deliberately keeping all other suggestion in abeyance, deliberately divorcing himself from all thought of Winifred Locke and her unfinished story-yet, with unconscious inconsistency, deferring all activity and decision until the vigil of the night should be over-he set about passing the day

as pleasantly as might be.

He knew the charming old Spanish resort and its romantic environs by heart, but he ordered a horse and, in the fastnesses of the fragrant cañons, wandering through and about the storied Mission with its time-worn court, its quaint old churchyard mutely eloquent of the days of padre, grandee and alcalde, he managed to pass the morning without dwelling upon the weird experience of the night before. Meeting his friend Hammersley, he lunched with him at the club and spent the rest of the day in his genial society.

Yet at nightfall, when he approached the hotel clerk, it was with a surprised sense of lassitude, as after

a day's hard work.

"Not well, Mr. Poynter?" the latter asked solicitously.

"Oh, yes. Why?" he returned,

raising his brows. "A shadow, I suppose, made your

face look sort of worn. What were you saying?" "I am going to sleep up at Winston

Hall tonight. I half expect my man Briggs on the nine-thirty train. If he comes, send him up to me, will you?"

He made his way through the long streets pulsing with the beauty and romance of the Southern night. Song of guitar, warble of girl voice floated out into the moonlight from dim verandas; lovers passed, moving like visions in a golden mist. A mandolin beat out a gay fandango in metallic The palms lifted praying sweetness. arms as if in rhapsody. Poynter moved on to Winston Hill.

The house, bathed in the hushed splendor, glowed here, cowered in shadow there, looking seaward, stately and still. Beyond, a tiny light told of the old gardener in the lodge. The great waves beat monotonous refrain

upon the cliffs below.

Poynter, like a figure in a dim, painted nocturne, moved up the shadowy steps. He passed in and on, up to the tapestry-room.

He closed the door softly, alone with the moonlight which held the beautiful, spacious room in thrall. Poynter slipped silently into the waiting chair.

How still it was! . Hark!

The silence.

It engulfed him, this cavernous silence, detaching him from self, from the sense of his own identity, his fastbeating heart, his tensely clenched hands. He leaned back in his chair.

Nay-not he-but sad, unutterably sad Geoffrey Hall, worn with weeping in that last moment of frustration and despair. Povnter could no longer withstand the tide of thought. It was as if, lashed to the rear of consciousness, it had suddenly burst its bounds and rushed forward, beating, possessing him in righteous triumph.

He closed his eyes with a sad smile, waiting as Geoffrey Hall was waiting-

There was Geoffrey Hall-before him-there, in the moonlight, seated in a deep-cushioned chair, his head thrown back, pale and motionless.

Poynter sat upright, thrusting aside the hallucination with vexation. But even as it faded the low, soft moan crept about him, smiting him breathless. It ended in a blur of sound, a delirious mumbling-and then- Did he see the thing-did he hear the low, ethereal intoning?—the End of the Story?

And when Geoffrey turned his face again to the life without twilight was falling like a gray-stoled nun. Spent with emotion, a sense of strange peace was upon him, as though he had passed through a great illness into another, gentler life where passion was not, only renunciation.

The door opened quietly. A footfall sounded behind him.

"Is that you, Breen?" he asked faintly, from very weakness, without turning his head

"Your servant, sir."

The strange response, the unwonted phraseology, caused him to turn his face to

The man stood a few paces away, his hat held between his hands, his head bowed, in

an attitude of humility and supplication.
"Breen," breathed Geoffrey hoarsely,
"what is it? What have you done? Ah,
heaven, you have lied to me!"

"Forgive me." He neither raised his

head nor his low, imploring tone.
"Breen," said Geoffrey, rising slowly, wonderingly, as into a great light, "my father lives. You have found him—seen him. Where?"
"Not—in the cemetery." Where?"

"Where? No more hesitation! Where? For mercy's sake, speak!" "Here.

"You have seen him-my father-Hugh Dorset-alive-

"Not-Hugh Dorset, sir."

"Quick, Breen! I cannot bear it. Who?"
"Sir—forgive me. I—am—your father.
Your servant, sir."

The man's bowed head did not move: still he held his hat between his hands, as if in There was no sound in all the supplication. quiet room.

Then the man, in the same low, beseeching

accents:

"For six months I—John Latimer—was her brother's tutor. We—loved. I was penniless, beneath her. Afterward-after your birth—she wrote me—the letter is here, in my bosom—that I must come to you, that I must watch over you, that I must stand between you and death, that I dared the hefer with the I must be the letter that I dered the hefer watch the I must be the letter that I dered the hefer watch the I must be the letter that I dered the letter that I dered the letter that I dered the letter that I must be the letter that I dered the letter that I must be the letter that I must be the letter that I must be the letter is here. not die before you, that I must be to you both father and mother-yet an alien to your love. I have done my best. Forgive me. Your servant, sir."

The winged moments sped. Silence and gloaming filled the room. Over the bowed head with its silvering hair, over the faithful bent shoulders, over the tender, patient hands, the young master's gaze wandered

and rested.

Gently he touched him, gently he raised the bowed form. For the first time he gazed into his father's eyes.

"Hush!" said Edward Poynter as one in a trance. "I will write it for you, dear. . . .

And then silence—sudden, complete -save for the incessant waves breaking on the cliffs beyond. The moonlight lay sweetly on the room.

Poynter sat upright, motionless, stunned. Fragments of his life seemed to lie about him, glancing with startling meaning up at him, as after a cataclysm. The moonlight lay serenely over all.

A prolonged, sharp rapping on the door startled the silence, brought him to his feet.

"Who is there?" he demanded in a

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loud, discordant tone.

"It's only me, sir," came the answer; "Briggs."

LA JOUEUSE DE FLÛTE

Par Jean Madeline

A petite sœur arriva un soir, au crépuscule. Elle parut sur le seuil de la porte, portant une étroite caisse en bois noir qui était tout son bagage. On entendit une voix chantante:

Je suis la garde-malade envoyée

par notre mère.

Elle entra, fine, glissant dans l'om-

bre de l'antichambre.

— Menez-moi près de mon malade. Son sourire monta dans la chambre douloureuse. Elle se pencha sur la chaise longue où Philippe était-étendu, enveloppé dans des couvertures. Elle mit gentiment sa petite main sur celle du jeune homme.

- Nous vous guérirons, dit-elle.

Oh! le regard que la mère leva vers celle-là qui apportait l'espérance! Et ce soir-là, dans la salle à manger qui ne rassemblait plus autour des mets sans saveur que des visages angoissés et des silences oppressés d'inquiétudes, les figures se détendirent, les verres tintèrent plus clair, l'intimité se rasséréna d'une douceur confiante, et le repas fut presque gai, pour la première fois depuis longtemps. Si bien qu'au dessert, le père déclara:

— Nous allons boire une bouteille de champagne pour fêter votre arrivée, ma

sceur.

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er;

- Très volontiers.

Elle accepta sans pruderie. Les règles de son ordre étaient très tolérantes. Et elle-même n'avait point de raideur ni d'onction monastiques. Sous sa cornette de gros linge et le linceul bleu de sa robe, elle était de la vie en fleur.

Cela durait depuis des mois, cette maladie de Philippe qui, à la suite

d'une pneumonie, restait phtisique à vingt-deux ans. Il était là-haut, dans sa chambre, où sa face amaigrie et ses yeux trop brillants souffraient dans le recueillement des rideaux toujours baissés. L'ombre de cette chambre tombait sur toute la maison où les yeux anxieux n'avaient plus que la lueur d'une veilleuse.

La petite sœur arrivée dans le crépuscule transforma aussitôt l'atmosphère. Il semblait que, par la porte ouverte devant elle, étaient entrés aussi une bouffée d'air pur, un rayon de lumière, une odeur vague

de printemps.

Elle allait, venait, préparait les potions, rangeait les linges, remontait l'oreiller, gardant dans ces besognes une grâce voltigeante que rien ne salissait. Philippe contemplait la petite sœur bleue avec ravissement.

- Comment vous appelez-vous?

- Sœur Lucile.

Ce nom fit le jour plus clair dans la chambre.

— Restez là, sœur Lucile, restez auprès de moi. Je me sens mieux de vous avoir à mon côté.

Elle s'asseyait près de son malade, et posait ses mains légères sur les mains moites, sur le front brûlant.

Elle le regardait en souriant.

Une douceur inconnue pénétrait le jeune homme, sous l'influence de ce charme. Et ce n'était pas une apparition immatérielle, une impalpable figure de vitrail qui se penchait sur sa souffrance. En mettant ses mains sur les siennes, c'était de la vie qu'elle posait sur lui, de la vie fraîche, qui sentait bon.

Ils restaient ainsi longuement, sans rien dire. Aucun souffle ne troublait cette limpidité. Mais, un soir, Philippe murmura:

- Vous avez de jolies mains, sœur Lucile, et vous avez de jolis yeux.

Les mains tremblèrent, s'éloignèrent, et, sous les paupières subitement baissées, le regard sembla prendre le voile.

- Monsieur Philippe, si vous me dites encore une chose semblable, ie

serai obligée de partir.

Il devint très pâle et ferma les yeux. Elle donna ses soins plus à distance. Mais elle ne pouvait pas éviter les effleurements nécessaires. Et ses mains étaient de celles qui laissent un peu de tendresse partout où elles se posent.

Le lendemain, il l'appela:

Sœur Lucile!Elle s'approcha.Vous êtes fâchée!

- Chut!... Soyez calme. Prenez

votre potion.

Elle la lui tendit. Mais la main était là, au bord de la tasse. Philippe, en se relevant, la frôla d'un baiser.

Sœur Lucile avait repris sous son bras sa petite caisse en bois noir. Elle s'en allait, quittant sans retard la maison où elle venait d'être outragée... Mais la mère l'attendait à la porte, et son regard suppliant lui barrait le chemin.

- Nous ne pouvons plus nous passer de vous ici... Et votre départ le tue-

rait.

Pauvre mère! Elle ne songeait pas à en être jalouse, de cette étrangère qui avait pris toute la place auprès de son enfant. Elle détournait son pur regard de la pente dangereuse de cette intimité, Qu'il vécut, mon Dieu! Et qu'il y eût du bonheur dans ses yeux.

De grâce, ne partez pas.
 Sœur Lucile posa sa petite caisse en

Sœur Lucile posa sa petite caisse en bois noir. Grave, le visage sévère, elle remonta vers la chambre. Son sourire

était parti.

Le printemps sonnait aux clochettes des lilas. Les médecins permirent que Philippe sortit sur la terrasse. Installé sur sa chaise longue, entouré de coussins, il tendait ses mains maigres comme pour la tirer vers lui, pour s'en couvrir...

Le ciel était d'une limpidité profonde. Il y avait seulement de petits nuages blancs et frêles qui flottaient très haut dans l'espace, peut-être la lessive des anges suspendue à des cordes invisibles.

Philippe et sœur Lucile se tenaient là, l'un près de l'autre, enveloppés dans la tiédeur de l'atmosphère et l'haleine des jardins d'avril. Par-dessus le mur de la terrasse, un acacia jetait ses branches. Quand elles secouaient leurs fleurs, la terrasse était pleine de pétales tombés...

Et ce fut un après-midi, dans une heure de douceur lumineuse, que le

jeune homme osa l'aveu.

- Sœur Lucile....

La cornette se pencha avec un battement d'ailes.

- Je vous aime.

Les ailes de la cornette battirent brusquement, comme un oiseau blessé.

Les ailes blanches s'étaient enfuies. Rien n'avait pu les retenir. Vite, vite, elles s'étaient envolées dans la rue où descendait le soir. Elles étaient allées s'abattre sur les dalles d'une église.

La parole scandaleuse n'avait pas troublé sœur Lucile dans son cœur ni dans sa chair. Mais elle l'avait atteinte dans sa virginité sacrée. Elle avait violé le refuge où la religieuse s'était mise au-dessus des tentations humaines.

Un prêtre pour se confesser, pour se faire laver de l'outrage... Mais le confessional était vide, l'église était déserte. La nuit commençait à tomber.

Et la petite sœur demeurait toute seule, sans guide, sans appui, dans le bouleversement de sa conscience. Elle ne pouvait pas retourner au couvent avec cette salissure sur elle...

— Marie, éclairez-moi! Jésus, dirigez-moi, puisque je suis seule en

votre présence!

Pendant longtemps, la petite sœur resta là, prosternée, dans l'attente du chuchotement divin qui descendrait sur elle.

Les ailes blanches glissaient de nou-

veau dans la rue. Où allaient-elles dans la nuit obscure? Poussées par une brise mystérieuse, elles revenaient vers la maison qu'elles avaient quittée. Auprès de la porte, elles s'arrêtaient, et s'immobilisaient dans l'ombre.

Sœur Lucile regardait la façade. Des lumières paraissaient derrière les fenêtres, non la clarté des lampes calmes, mais des lueurs inquiètes et agitées. Il y avait un mauvais coup de vent dans l'intérieur de cette demeure. La porte s'ouvrit, un homme sortit. Sœur Lucile reconnut le médecin.

- Est-il plus mal? demanda-t-elle

en s'élançant vers lui.

— Ah! c'est vous, ma sœur. Le pauvre garçon est perdu. Une émotion violente a dû briser le fragile ressort. Il a peut-être quinze jours à vivre... Il n'y a plus qu'à adoucir sa fin.

Droite, grave, résolue, sœur Lucile repassa le seuil où elle était arrivée un soir, au crépuscule. Elle remonta l'escalier vers celui qui allait mourir. Et toute sa grâce odorante fit de nouveau éclosion dans la chambre, où son sourire revenu se pencha sur Philippe.

Vous! dit-il, quand ils furent seuls.
 Vous êtes revenue, ma sœur. Vous

me pardonnez donc?

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Elle inclina vers cette souffrance son visage charmant, et doucement, chastement, mit un baiser sur les paupières du jeune homme.

- Oh! sœur Lucile... sœur Lucile...

m'aimeriez-vous aussi?

— Je vous aime, dit-elle.

Le charitable mensonge fleurit dans la chambre de souffrance. Il balançait autour du lit ses rameaux parfumés. Il s'effeuillait en pures caresses.

Par la fenêtre ouverte entrait la fête du printemps. Mais ce n'était pas de là que venait la lumière. Elle venait de celle qui, en laissant éclater sa féminité, en répandant la séduction qu'elle avait cachée sous le voile, apparaissait une adorable créature d'amour.

Sœur Lucile n'écartait plus les paroles ardentes. Elle les accueillait près du cloître où s'était enfermé son cœur comme des pauvres auxquels on ne refuse pas l'aumône.

Donnez-moi vos mains, sœur
 Lucile. Donnez-moi vos yeux. Votre

regard me ressuscite.

Elle donnait ses mains et son sourire. Elle donnait sa grâce et son parfum. Elle donnait sa loyauté et sa pudeur. Elle donnait peut-être son salut éter-

Car elle était la fiancée du Christ, et ne devait recevoir le murmure amoureux d'aucun homme. Mais ce n'était pas à l'homme qu'elle faisait son don, c'était à sa souffrance. Et partout où il y a de la souffrance, n'y

a-t-il pas un peu de Jésus? Sa pitié devait-elle donc s'arrêter aux plaies du corps et au versement des tisanes? Et en entourant le moribond des flûtes de douceur et de tendresse qui charmeraient sa fin, trahissait-elle son serment et le rôle auquel elle s'était vouée? Ne remplissaitelle pas, au contraire, une mission de pitié supérieure, de charité plus haute, de plus noble et plus généreux sacrifice? Et si elle péchait contre les règles monastiques et scandalisait la morale humaine, ne restait-elle pas aussi la servante attentive et la fiancée fidèle de son divin Ami?

Et l'enchantement continua. Le mensonge de sœur Lucile enveloppa le pauvre garçon jusqu'à l'heure suprême où l'agonisant demanda:

- Sœur Lucile, donnez-moi vos

lèvres.

Elle se pencha sur lui. Elle les lui donna. C'est ainsi qu'il mourut, avec un baiser sur la bouche.

Alors seulement la petite sœur alla se confesser au prêtre.

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MONEY may "make the mare go," but at the race-track it is often the mare that makes the money go.

MY NOMAD SOUL

L IKE vagrant breeze that wanders gently by And on above the uplands heavenward, My soul goes forth and mounts unto the sky, Singing a song of rapture all unheard.

Upon the crest of mighty ocean spray
My soul, like wind, is strong and brave and free;
Great giant of the dark and unknown way
That crosses the stern beauty of the sea.

Within the storm my soul and wind are one,
And sport in tumult with a stricken world,
Each conscious that the other was begun
Before the earth was from the heavens hurled.

A hidden whisper is the wind, my soul, Or striving giant of fantastic glee; Gentle as strength when under wise control, But at the primal passions, quick in me.

Yet strength and tenderness their refuge find Within my lover's arms, where, sheltered deep— Oh, loving arms!—like gentle wandering wind My nomad soul lies down to happy sleep.

ISABEL MOORB.



PARADOXICAL

"HE is an agnostic, isn't he?"
"Without a doubt."



M ISS GADABOUT—My doctor compelled me to stay in the house for the past four weeks, so please tell me all the news.

MISS TOBASCO—Really, I have heard no gossip for a month.

ON IDENTIFYING CHARACTERS

By Erastus Worthington

HAVE a confession to make. I am
a writer and I go to nature for
my characters. I have repeatedly been asked, "Was Araminta in
'How I Paid for a Baby Carriage' your
wife?" or, "Is Euphemia in 'The Trials
of a Married Man' your better half?"

Why, of course. I never admitted

it before, but now I do.

My stories are a stage, and wifey, in her time, plays many parts. She doesn't like it very much, but I say to her, "Marcia"—her name isn't Marcia; it's a different one in each story and altogether different in real life—"Marcia, this thing means bread and butter to both of us. I don't know anyone else half so well as I do you, and so if you'll please be the plain-looking, absent-minded, timid, incapable wife in today's story, tomorrow I'll make you handsome and self-assertive and dominating."

And Marcia says, "But I'm not any

of those seven."

"Never mind, dear," say I; "if I made up a character out of whole cloth and never thought of anyone at all, it wouldn't have any life. It would lack modeling; it would be putty-faced and

altogether invertebrate."

So I make her selfish—although she's self-sacrificing; and dumpy—although she isn't; and handsome today and homely tomorrow and pretty the next, although she may invert the order in her own person; and the consequence is that when she goes to a tea people say, "Now tell me, are you Minerva, or Arabella, or any one of half a score of characters?"

And then Marcia shows she is a woman of feeling by answering with a good deal of heat, and if I am near her I treasure up the glance and perhaps use it with good effect in my por-

trayal of an adventuress.

And the clothes I dress her in in one story would give delight to her heart, while she would put those I use in the next in the poor box. I don't go in much for clothes, not being a man-milliner, and the technicalities of feminine sartoriality elude me; but I do manage once in awhile to indicate that my heroine is clad in the gladdest rags, and whereas it would take a dressmaker several days and take from me many dollars so to clothe Marcia, in a story it is but a few squirls of my pen and the woman is habilimented.

Some people in far-away States, readers of this periodical, think that my wife must be very expensively gowned solely because I generally write in the first person and often tell domestic tales. On the other hand, there are those who imagine that I am a sort of backwoodsman and that Marcia dresses in homespun, solely from that inveterate habit people have of reading an author's own life into his work.

Why, by the same token, I have risen from the humblest beginnings; I have descended from the proudest circles; I have taken up literature because I couldn't do anything else, and I have made my way slowly and laboriously, as Stevenson did, playing "the sedulous ape" to my betters in

letters.

For, if Marcia is identified as the wife, I am even more identified with my hero's parts. Not that they are ever heroic—worse luck. My pen does not lend itself to heroics and I write

past

more naturally about simple-minded men, and as I happen to look the part myself I am always asked at receptions and the like, "Were you that man in 'The Dopey Gentleman' who acted so like an—who was so—er—?"

"Yes," I always answer, "I was that man, and I was also the murderer in 'The Day the Cook Died,' and I was the supersensitive clergyman in 'The Bishop's Enemy,' and the crazy elevator-man in 'A Drop Too Much,' and the timid bachelor in 'A Night in a Day Nursery,' and the henpecked husband in 'The Rod of Iron,' and the loquacious barber in 'A Close Shave.'"

Why, it's as easy as lying. Accentuate or diminish your own characteristics and you have a host of characters without going out of the house. Every man is a potential murderer at one time or another. You don't have to look up a villain in order to draw from nature. Dip from your own well, mix in a little of your own goodness and pick out one of your neighbors for the outward characteristics, and the

rest is easy. But that matter of neighbors is a risky one. When one lives in a small suburban town it does not do at all to give faithful portraits of one's neighbors, so I take the generosity of Mr. Pitkin, and the dishonesty of that old scalawag Judson, and the benevolent appearance of dear Joe Appleton, and, by mixing them well together, I make Baxter the hypocrite—always putting in a little of what I know of myself for verisimilitude. And not a soul in town knows where I got my ingredi-But once in awhile I hit on a chance resemblance, and then I hear from it.

Perhaps I meet a man on the train and he says, "Say, that was all right, that story of yours in Carper's."

I don't write for Carper's, but it is a curious fact that no one ever remembers where he read a story. Your neighbor goes on and in a minute you find out that he is talking of "The Man in the Overalls" that came out in the Censurer. Then he adds, with

a sly wink: "I recognized Bingley all

right."

As a matter of fact, Bingley was not in my mind at all when I wrote, but I see in a second that I have accidentally hit him off. However, it would never do to let my neighbor think that I meant Bingley, because if a man is going to be free with his friends in a book he'd better live on the other side of the continent from where his neighbors reside. (My ancestors were Irish.) So I tell him that it is purely an accidental resemblance, but he only winks the harder and says, "Of course," and makes me wish that I had had Bingley in mind, that I might have made it a little truer to life. One might as well have the game as the name.

It is a fact that I always use my own house as the model for all houses that do not need to be specially constructed for the purpose of the story, and I also use the neighborhood roads the better to run my vehicles and make my characters walk, but I generally add some false identification for the purpose of throwing readers off the track. Not long since I wrote a story and laid the scene in the village where I live—not a hundred miles from Long Island Sound—and the better to make it seem real I said it was the tenth house from the station-mine is the fifteenth. I also called the hero George

and the heroine Almira.

When that story came out it made considerable talk, as there was a good deal of action in it and the scapegoat in it was thought, as usual, to be myself. A week or so after its appearance I went to a card party in the village and met Barton, who was one of the first men to be neighborly after I located in Pleasanton. Barton seemed distant. In a few minutes I encountered his wife. She was even more remote. I did not understand it, and, as I like to be on friendly terms with my fellow-townsmen, I went to Joe Appleton and asked him whether he knew of any possible cause for the marked hauteur of the Bartons.

"Well, I don't think George altogether liked your using him for that

drunken imbecile in your 'From Pillar to Lamp Post' that came out in Scribbler's."

"You mean the Saturday Past," I

corrected.

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"Oh, was it there? Anyhow, he didn't like your naming the feeble little wife Almira or saying that the house was the tenth one from the station.

Made it a little too marked."

My mind worked like lightning and I counted houses, and it was even as my friend had said. I had inadvertently given my characters the Barton Christian names and had placed them in Barton's house; and although I spent a good ten minutes trying to explain matters to "George" and "Almira" I was not markedly successful; and now, if I ever use any house in this village again I'll make it the seventieth from the station, and as there are only sixty-nine, I can't make a mistake again.

I've had to give up using sewing societies in my stories; and postmistresses, doctors and clergymen have to be delineated in the most general terms. as the local physician is too handy and too capable to run the risk of offending him, and I'm sure I don't know what I'd do if the postmistress refused to give me my mail, as a large part of my income arrives in the bags.

But I have one advantage over authors who live all the year round in one place. In the summers I go up to Massachusetts, and there have been occasions when I have boldly used my opposite neighbor and given him a Berkshire environment, and the "shore" people did not recognize him. while my good farmer friends are completely metamorphosed by placing them in suburban homes and slicking them up just a little. For human nature is apt to be just as natural in the real country as it is in the suburbs, and I believe it is Carlyle who holds that the main difference between one man and another is the clothes they wear.

In conclusion, I would like to tell a little anecdote of which I am either the hero or the villain, according to one's

point of view.

One evening pretty Miss Carleton said to me, "I hate to be in the same room with you, as I'm sure you're studying me for your next story.

With admirable presence of mind I

said to her:

"What is one to do if he wants a

pretty woman for a heroine?"

And then the next story of mine that came out had for its heroine an irredeemably homely young woman.

And now Miss Carleton won't speak

to me.

SUGGESTIONS

CENT of the wild, wet marshes, And lisp of the lazy sea, And a moldering wreck 'mid the coarse green reeds Looming dismally.

Scent of the dank, dark marshes, And boom of the lonely sea, And a screaming seagull sweeping by Like a startled memory.

CHARLES WHARTON STORK.

A GRIDIRON DUET.

By Aloysius Coll

GIRL IN THE GRANDSTAND

She-3 P.M.

THERE he comes!—my hero, Looking now my way; Yes, he sees me waving— Now he'll win the day!

She-3.30 P.M.

Now they're off!—He's waving To me! See him wave? Who could be so thoughtful, Brawny, big and brave?

Sho-3.45 P.M.

Goodness! What a tackle! Poor boy! What a thud! Wonder if he sees me, Blinded in the mud!

She-4 P.M.

Oh, they'll surely kill him!
No, he sees me now,
Crawling out—but look! there's
Blood upon his brow!

She-4.05 P.M.

Goal — they've put my hero In the ambulance! I must go and see him— If I get a chance!

He-At the hospital-8 P.M.

Mighty glad to see you;
Didn't know you came
Into town this morning—
Were you at the game?

CAPTAIN ON THE FIELD

Не-3 Р.м.

What a mob of people!
Packed from fence to goal;
Here's a chance to get our
Team "out of the hole"!

Не-3.30 Р.М.

Hi, there, you policeman, Get the people back! . . Ready!—X, M, T and W—— Fine one! Fine one, Jack!

He-3.45 P.M.

Anyone a kerchief?
Swab my peepers, Speis—
Can't go down the line with
Town lots in my eyes!

He-4 P.M.

"Down!" "Down!"—get your bloody
Foot out of my face! . . .
Oh, not much the matter—
Ankle out of place!

He-4.05 P.M.

Thank you, fellows! Thank you!
Yes, a little sore—
What's the dif?—we got 'em
Beaten 6 to 4!

She-At the hospital-8.01 P.M.

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A MAN will admit to a woman that he can't live without her weeks and weeks before he'll admit it to himself.

OIL UPON THE WATERS

By Morgan Robertson

THE instrument is getting drunk," said the executive officer, as he joined the group on the after superstructure deck. Trouble is coming from somewhere."

"Mr. Clarkson, I protest," said the chaplain warmly. "In my capacity of Gospel interpreter I protest against calling Finnegan an instrument of Providence. Why do you permit him to drink?"

"Captain's orders," said the officer. "So that he may become an instrument of Providence, Mr. Parmlee," added the surgeon, slapping the chaplain good-humoredly on the back. "Think of the many times he has saved this ship and all hands by doing something when drunk that he couldn't do if sober."

"Of course, you are right. Providence seems to choose Finnegan in some mysterious manner to- But it is bewildering. I cannot understand it. How does he know what to do?'

"You forget the subjective state," said the surgeon, "into which Finnegan is thrown when drunk. You forget the clairvoyant knowledge possessed by the subliminal self—that you call the immortal soul."

"Speak English," said the chief gineer. "Where did Finnegan get engineer.

'Go down to your engines," answered Dr. Bryce severely. "Even they have souls—even engineers have souls, though they don't know it."

"But seriously, doctor," said the engineer, "I thought clairvoyance was all humbug. What is this publiminal self?"

"The primordial brain, inherent through all organic change of which

instincts are but manifestations-that cares for drunken men and fools, that brings back the cat and the carrier pigeon, that has knowledge of all things, thoughts or conditions in heaven or earth of interest to that brain's owner.'

"Does it prophesy?" asked the chaplain. "Hasn't Finnegan displayed

prophetic insight?"

"Not at all-only clairvoyant knowledge of existing conditions that threaten trouble. The dumb pressure of this inward knowledge makes him uneasy, and he drinks, befuddles his objective mind, and gets in closer touch with this knowledge-in the subjective or hypnotoid state. The subliminal self is dumb-it can only impart its knowledge by affirmation."

"How? Explain this," said the

puzzled engineer.

"By affirmation. When the objective mind, or brain, speculates or guesses rightly-that is, when the stream of consciousness happens to touch upon anything in connection with the hidden fact known only to the subliminal self, there will be an uprush of feeling that affirms, confirms, clinches—and we act, or merely know. When this knowledge is of facts or conditions we call it intuition, when of a thought in the mind of another we call it telepathy."

"Whew!" said the engineer, waving both hands and shaking his head. "It's too much for me." He de-

parted in mock haste.

"Mr. Clarkson," said the surgeon to the first lieutenant, "if Finnegan is drinking, he is subject to an inward pressure. What trouble threatens this ship or her people?"

"None, that I know of," answered the executive slowly, looking around on the calm sea and blue sky. "All hands are well, this ship is invulnerable to anything but Whitehead torpedoes, and we can sink any craft carrying them before she can get near us. The forward thirteen-inch gun-mount is out of order, but we'll find the difficulty when we're out far enough. The barometer is falling, but I don't anticipate a gale, and it needs a typhoon and a cross sea to disturb this ship. No, I see no trouble—though Finnegan may. Here he is, now." They peered down over the break of the superstructure at a gray-haired, emaciated old man, with a vacant smile on his face, being pursued around the after-turret by the master-at-arms.

"Out o' this, Finnegan," said the ship's chief of police as he caught him. Then he pushed him gently forward. "Jes' wanted to tell the cap'n 'bout it," mumbled Finnegan. "Battle-ships are bad gun-platforms—he wants

ter know it."

The first lieutenant and surgeon ex-

changed glances.

"What's on his mind?" asked the former. "Battleships are the best gunplatforms afloat."

"Don't know," returned the surgeon thoughtfully. "Better watch him."

"I won't have time," said the lieutenant. "You watch him. I have troubles of my own."

"All right-I will. Don't lock him

up."

The group separated, and Mr. Clarkson went to the forward thirteen-inch turret, where a damaged gun-mount demanded attention; and, this attended to, his mind was taken up with the target practice of all the gun crews for the next three hours. At the end of that time two distinct and apparently irrelevant facts were brought to his busy mind—one, by messenger from the officer of the deck, that the barometer was below 29, the other that Finnegan was still drunk, but no drunker. The latter fact was attested by the appearance of the old man himself in the turret, where the executive officer and the gun crews were perspiring over the work. Both guns had been loaded with solid shot, and were to be fired at extreme elevation.

"Good gunsh," remarked Finnegan, as the men took positions for firing. "Good gunsh—shoot a long way—but

can't hit torpedo boats."

"Yes," answered Mr. Clarkson, eying him severely. "Good guns—shoot ten miles—over the horizon. Get out of here."

The harmless and useless old fellow was hustled out and into the arms of the listening surgeon, who led him away. Then the port gun was fired, and a huge pointed cylinder of solid steel weighing over a half ton went up into the air, while the great gun sagged

back on its oil cushion.

But there were other sounds in the turret than the roar of the gun; there were the crackling of breaking steel, the swishing of hot oil and the exclamations of startled men. No one was injured; but investigation disclosed that the turret flooring had given way, that the elevating gear of both guns was damaged beyond immediate repair, and that the hydraulic rammers were disabled. The charge in the other gun could not be extracted, and the condition of the gun-mount made it unwise to discharge the gun. The whole forward thirteen-inch turret was out of commission, and could not be repaired away from a dockyard; so, with one gun empty, the other loaded, and both pointing upward at an angle of fifteen degrees, they swung the turret amidships and left it.

"Sticking up like a couple of sore thumbs," grunted Mr. Clarkson, as he joined the surgeon and looked back at the guns. "What has the oracle to

say about this?"

"You mean Finnegan?" answered the surgeon. "I've just left him. His rather muddled comment was to the effect that such heavy weights at an elevation made battleships rather topheavy and that bad weather was coming."

"Well, dammit," said the officer in amazement, "he's right; but what's

taken hold of him? What means this technical erudition?"

"Don't know. I've put him to sleep in the sick-bay, and he's safeor, rather, we're safe for awhile-

from prophecy."

Not altogether; Finnegan's prediction of bad weather was ratified by the still falling barometer, and before midnight the big ship was pounding into a head sea that compelled her, massive as she was, to slow down. Even at half speed the Argyll went through the seas oftener than over them. Green hills of water rose over the bow, plunged aft and shattered against the forward turret and superstructure, to rise as high as the bridge in an almost solid mass of foam. Battleships, heavy with armor and guns, are notoriously poor sea boats, and the Argyll was no better than her class; she made bad weather of it. And, as though this straight-on, regular head sea were not severe enough to the big, unwieldy and very bad sea boat, the furious wind that came out of the dark like a solid mass-pressing insistentlyhauled just before daylight, and blew from a direction at right angles to the first. Then arose a cross sea-a combination of forces against which the best helmsmen often are helpless, and with her steering engine straining like giant the Argyll an overworked plunged and rolled, and lifted and sank, until, as day broke over the troubled ocean, Mr. Clarkson was forced to admit that another of Finnegan's comments was based upon truth; the elevated gun muzzles made her a little more top-heavy.

But typhoons are short-lived. By ten o'clock a rising barometer brought comfort to the distracted ship's company, and the wind hauled further and moderated. But there was little abatement of the bewildering cross sea, and there was an almost continuous succession of rain squalls bombarding the ship that kept fully a third of the horizon hidden at all times. Yet, in spite of the general discomfort, it being Sunday morning, Mr. Parmlee held

services on the berth-deck.

Tired and sleepy as they were, the half thousand men, gripping the benches to keep their seats, were impressed by the chaplain's sincere words. They listened intently, joined in the hymn played by the band, and bowed their heads in prayer as the earnest young chaplain gave thanks to the God of storms for their reprieve from death. But as his voice dropped its cadence in the final amen every man there sprang to his feet, for preceding the amen by a tenth of a second there rang through the ship a thundering report and a crash that came of nothing less than the dis-

charge of a thirteen-inch gun.

Church "let out." Away they went, an undisciplined mob, and surrounded Finnegan descending from the big forward turret, with a startled, dumfounded expression on his face and blood streaming from a wound in it inflicted by some flying fragment of the further wrecked turret-gear. The big starboard gun had been fired, and, though it now pointed higher than before, its centre of gravity was unquestionably lower; for it had broken down through the weakened flooring and hung in the wreckage, a menace to everything beneath it. They began slinging both guns in chains, and bracing them with shores—a long, hard job-while Finnegan, shocked into sobriety, but nerveless and uncertain of movement, was haled into the presence of the captain and his officers. Dr. Bryce, at his own request, was permitted to do the questioning.

"Why did you fire the gun, Finne-

gan?" he asked kindly.

"'Fore Gawd, sir," whimpered the old fellow, "I dunno-I felt like itand-I dunno. I felt I oughter-that is, 'fore I did it—then I felt like a fool."

"Why did you feel that you ought to fire it? What did you think was

wrong?"

"I felt-all night-yes, sir-all night I kinder dreamed o' firin' it-gettin' rid o' the weight. 'Twas on my mind when I turned out, and I jes' couldn't help it, sir."

"Had you taken a drink this morn-

ing? Speak truly-you know you are permitted to drink."

"I took three nips, sir-one 'fore

breakfast."

"Then you were in normal condition. Finnegan, yesterday you said something about battleships being bad gun-platforms. What did you mean? Had your firing the gun any connection with that idea?

Finnegan looked bewildered, but did

not answer.

"You said, too," went on the surgeon, "that the big guns could shoot a long way, but could not hit torpedo boats. Do you remember what put the idea into your head?"

The old fellow looked helplessly

"Forgotten, I suppose," continued e surgeon. "Well, all right. Then the surgeon. we are to take, as your reason for firing the gun, that you considered the weight of the shot and powder a danger?"

"Yes, sir," answered Finnegan, his face clearing. "She was loggy in the seaway-she was top-heavy. I couldn't get it off my mind, sir—honest, I jes' couldn't stop thinkin'."

"Very well-that is all," said the surgeon. "Mr. Clarkson"-he turned to the executive officer-"has he improved the stability of the ship? Has he done any real good?"

"No," answered the lieutenant, eying the cringing old man severely. has lessened the moment of inertia but a trifle and the danger was past."

"Then it was an auto-suggestion, delivered to his subliminal self when the danger was real-and it persisted. He spoke last evening of bad gun-platforms, which is a thought connected with topheaviness; and of guns shooting far, but being unable to hit torpedo boats -equally connected. Auto-suggestion and association of ideas, gentlemen, that is all."

'All!" said the irreverent chief "Isn't that enough? engineer.

thought he was only drunk."

"Not at all-simply the victim of persistent subliminal promptings, first delivered as an auto-suggestion to the subconscious mind by its objective fellow, and finding ready and reactive relief through a train of associated-"

"Oh, Lord, sir!" broke in the vic-"I didn't do all that, tim piteously. sir. I only took three drinks."

But because the victim of auto-suggestion, subliminal promptings and association of ideas had disturbed church and the doubtful peace of the ship's company on that stormy Sabbath morning, he was consigned to the brig-where he went to sleep; and Dr. Bryce, having solved the problem to his satisfaction, sought his room to incorporate the result in a thesis he was preparing on the subject. But sleep and thesis were both impinged upon by a huge antithetical fact forgotten by Finnegan and unconsidered by the doctor. Finnegan awakened with a groan of disgust and the doctor arose with a sigh, for there sounded through the ship the bugle call to quarters, followed by the continuous rattle of all small and secondary guns. Going to the bridge, Dr. Bryce found those of his brother officers not at stations inspecting through the rain squalls a line of long, low, four-funneled craft about a mile ahead, the most sinister and evilappearing of all seagoing war craft, torpedo-boat destroyers.

"Great guns!" exclaimed Mr. Clarkson, as the surgeon reached his side. "Is it possible that Finnegan had clairvoyant knowledge that they were there and tried to hit them? He said that the big guns would shoot a long way.'

"But he also said," answered the doctor, with doubt and speculation in his face, "that torpedo boats couldn't be hit. One thought, as a subliminal inspiration, would annul the other."

Yet everything he's said or done has relevancy except one: Why did he

fire that big gun?"

"Because he was drunk," growled the listening engineer. "You fellows will get the fantods if you don't look out. They're catching. I shall avoid you.

"Do so," answered the surgeon loftily. "You are only an engineer. God made you, it is true—and He made

Finnegan."

Laughing as he went, the engineer

left the bridge for the engine-room. where he was needed; and for similar reasons Mr. Clarkson left further immediate consideration of Finnegan to the surgeon, and devoted himself to the problem in hand, which promised to be serious. The sea was still heavy, running in two directions; and not only the big battleship, but the smaller, lighter and faster craft ahead were tossed and tumbled about in a manner to make accurate gun-fire impossible. But herein lay the difference and the problem in hand. While the Argyll had nothing but gun-fire with which to withstand those swift and elusive enemies, and was left helpless by its elimination, they, on the contrary, weakly endowed in this form of aggressiveness. dominated the situation by possession of a weapon of war unaffected by the non-stability of gun-platforms-deadly mechanical fish that, undisturbed by wave motion or deflecting obstacle, maintain the original direction given them by the tubes from which they are propelled; that seek a twenty-foot depth and keep it while they travel at a thirty-knot rate; that carry in their heads a charge of guncotton, explodable on impact, that can tear out the side of the strongest battleship afloat-Whitehead torpedoes.

There were four destroyers in sight through the smother, each a magnified torpedo boat, able to take to the sea, but carrying the usual pair of tubes and store of torpedoes. And there was strong evidence that they meant to use them. There were signals displayed from the small yards, crossed up forward, and the two rear boats circled around, taking up positions on the bow and quarter of the Argyll, while the two ahead shot across her path to reach similar positions on the other side. It was to be a simultaneous rush of boats from four directions, and perhaps from five, for farther ahead, only occasionally taking form through the driving rain and spume, seemed to be another long, low craft. Perhaps there were even others, farther along and out of sight-called by the voice of the thirteen-inch gun.

The Argyll barked and spat with her small and secondary guns, but not an enemy was hit. Not a gun could be aimed in that furious turmoil of tossing water, which hove the ship down broadside to forty-five degrees and pitched her fore and aft to twenty. Ballistic formulas were worthless; gunners could only load, and fire, at an approximate moment of swing. And soon firing was stopped because it was a sheer waste of ammunition. The officers uneasily paced the bridge.

"Battleships are bad gun-platforms," said Mr. Clarkson significantly to the surgeon, as for a moment their eyes met in passing.

"And big guns can't hit torpedo boats," answered the surgeon when they passed again. "And they really do make us top-heavy."

"But big guns shoot a long way," returned the executive, next time they passed. "What the devil did he mean?" "Don't know. Wait—it'll work out.

He meant something."

"Here they come!" called the captain suddenly. "Resume firing—every

gun that will bear."

The mist in the air had thickened. blotting out the fifth craft ahead, and all but obliterating the four others which, it was dimly seen, had turned end-on to the Argyll and were coming each from its quarter-point in the circle of which the big tumbling ship was the centre. A menacing sight they appeared to these trained officers, versed in the possibilities of torpedo warfare; each a geometrical figure between two high white waves, that enlarged to the vision as does an approaching express train. And it was at express train speed that they came; a very few minutes would decide the fate of the Argyll and her seven hundred souls. If, in that heaving sea, but one shot as large as a twentypounder should hit a vital part of a boat, that boat would stop. But the storm of shot and shell flew wild; it hit the water at half distance; it flew in air and raised a cloud beyond the targets; it disappeared in the distant smudge; and the rushing destroyers

came on, to half the distance, to a third; in a moment they would be within easy torpedo range, and the captain approached a voice tube, calling, "All hands!" and muttering the

conclusion of his thought.

But before that moment arrived a shout went up from a casemate. One boat had been hit; for a cloud of steam arose, and she swung out of her course. Then more shouts were heard; two others stopped, one the centre of a radiating effulgence of red, which changed to thick, yellow smoke, and hid her few fragments from view; the other emitting steam like the first. The fourth wheeled about and fled, followed by shot and shell which went remarkably true compared with the inaccuracy of the preceding fire. The dazed and astonished officers on the bridge, and the exulting crews at the gun positions, did not, until the last of the quartet had settled beneath the surface from the deadly accuracy of the fire which ensued, realize that the sea had calmed—that, though the big ship still lifted and fell from the action of the ground-swell, there were no disturbing waves, no cross seas-no aim-destroying heave. The troubled ocean had become like plastic glass, though the wind still held its hurricane force and the air was filled with horizontal rain and spindrift.

There was no time for speculation; they had sunk but four destroyers. With guns silent and crews at stations, they steamed on through the storm, looking for that fifth long, low craft, and soon, through a break in the gray receding wall of spume into which they seemed to be rushing, they sighted her, quiet and inert but for her sluggish rolling—a two-masted craft, with gaffs aloft and the red ensign of England flying union down from her mainmast head—a merchant steamer in distress.

The battleship slowed down and lowered her boats. Before they were well clear of her side the listening officers on the bridge heard the exclamatory words of the men that manned them, telling of oil—oil upon the oars, oil upon the sea.

"Yes," said the rescued steamer

skipper, as he told of his plight a little later, "she's a tank-steamer and was doomed for the bottom anyhow when those torpedo boats came up. But it wasn't them that sunk her and spread all this oil about—it was the act of God. Something came down sidewise out o' the sky—a meteor, I think—and went right through us. Curious—it left a round hole, about thirteen inches across."

"It was most certainly the act of God," said Mr. Parmlee reverentially, as they discussed it a little later.

"Finnegan's bullhead luck," commented the irreverent engineer.

"You are both right," said Dr. Bryce. "It was Finnegan's subliminal intelligence acting through the outlet of his muddled brain."

"D'you mean to say," queried the engineer, "that he had intelligent knowledge of what he was doing?"

"No, not as ordinarily understood. Nor was he the victim of false autosuggestion, as we thought. But he had subconscious knowledge of the presence, over the horizon and in our path, of the four destroyers and the He could only extank-steamer. press his uneasiness in terms of objective consciousness—that is, when he thought of bad gun-platforms he was impelled to seek the captain. When he thought of the inefficiency of big guns against torpedo craft he was impelled to speak of it. He knew there was a possibility that at a certain moment of the ship's swing the range of the gun and the distance to the steamer would coincide, and he went to the turret. His all-night worry over the weight aloft and his firing the gun to get rid of it were only outlets for the subliminal knowledge of coming danger, and the remedyoil upon the sea."

The surgeon had waxed fairly eloquent, but the engineer remained un-

convinced.

"I can't believe that," he said, with an incredulous frown. "You're a wonder, doctor, at explanations; but it's my private opinion that Finnegan was simply and beautifully drunk."

